

Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre

Family Information Handbook



Welcome to Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre

We have an ongoing commitment to provide a service of the highest quality. Our service goal is to create an environment where both children and families feel happy, safe and secure.

We are a Committee of Management run centre that is community owned and run. The centre relies solely on the families' involvement and support to keep operating. We therefore invite any parent interested in supporting the centre to join our parent committee and help make this centre a success.

The staff at the centre strive to create an environment which has your individual children as their top priority. Their immediate response to the ever changing needs of families in the community shows their professionalism and excellence as part of the child care industry. You will find them to be flexible, innovative and always willing to assist you in any way possible.

We hope to provide the opportunity for all families of the service to be involved in aspects of the organisation and assist us in the functioning of the centre. All suggestions are welcome and will help us to improve on our service delivery.

Any questions or queries should be directed to the Director of the staff in your child's room.

We are always pleased to discuss any issues with you. This booklet has been designed as a resource reference for parents; we trust that this will assist you in receiving the maximum benefits the centre has to offer you and your child.

Suzanne Jones,
Director.

Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre

Centre Philosophy

We are a community based centre and as a community we hold these values:

1. Children

We believe all children have the right to be valued, respected and protected. All children bring to childcare a unique set of capabilities and interests which we must support and enhance. We will provide a warm, safe and stimulating environment where each child can grow and develop to their full potential.

2. Families

We acknowledge parents and family as the child's primary educators. We value strong partnerships between families and the centre. To create these partnerships we need to communicate with families with respect and confidentiality and support them in raising capable, confident children. We will welcome and work with all families and children.

3. Community

We see our role as a bridge between children as part of their families, and the world around them. We will offer opportunities for children to play, share, make friends and explore relationships outside their families, developing their abilities to contribute to the community in which they live.

4. Program

We believe in providing an environment which fosters and encourages play, and acknowledge the importance of play to a child's development. We offer experiences which are child-centred and based on the interests and needs of the children and families who make up our community. We believe that children need to be listened to and have choices in their daily activities.

Our Broad Goals

-) To provide a safe, secure environment for children and staff.
-) To be flexible, efficient, friendly and non-judgmental.
-) To develop our abilities as child carers.
-) To care about all children and feel responsible towards them, especially those placed in our care.
-) To encourage social development by providing opportunities for sharing, taking turns, making friends, resolving conflicts, solving problems, helping and accepting others, co-operating on projects and building self-esteem.
-) To encourage emotional development through verbal expressions of thoughts and feelings, experiencing rules and limits, experiencing kindness, justice and empathy, and recognising and accepting emotions in others.
-) To develop respect for other individuals.
-) To develop responsibility for one's own actions in self-help, health, safety and interpersonal areas; and to exercise appropriate independence.
-) To encourage the physical development of gross motor skills through outdoor games and activities, as well as fine motor development through the use of manipulative toys, blocks, puzzles and other small tools and objects.
-) To facilitate the development of visual-motor skills.
-) To encourage creativity by offering many kinds of materials and frequent experiences in music, art, dramatic play, literature and oral skills.
-) To encourage interest in language through stories, puppetry, the home corner and its equipment, music, games, problem solving and conversations.
-) To facilitate intellectual development by widening the child's experience in order to increase knowledge, basic concepts and skills.
-) To see that our program reflects the values of the diverse family and cultural backgrounds of the children in our care.

Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre Details

10 Groom St,
St Helens, TAS, 7216
Ph: 6376 1645
Fax: 6376 1377
Email: possmagic@bigpond.com

Payment Methods

Cheques, Cash, EFTPOS, BPay and Direct Debit.

Payments are to be made at the office. Office hours are 9am - 5pm.

Cheques: Should be made payable to Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre.

Direct Debit and BPay: Ask at office for details.

Waiting List

Where there is no place available, a child may be put on the waiting list. Your details will be taken and the Director will contact you as soon as a place becomes available. There is no fee involved in this process.

Absences

There is no reduction in fees for absences where a child holds a permanent booking. This includes child absences due to sickness or other. Each child has only 42 allowable absences per year (excluding times of centre closure). A medical certificate is required if your child is unwell. Please hand this to the Director.

Childcare Benefit

Childcare Benefit is available at Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre. You must phone Centrelink (Family Assistance Office) ph: 136150 before commencement. You must register that your child will be attending our service.

Late Collection Fee

Parents of children who collect their child after 6:00pm will incur a late collection fee of \$1.00 per minute per child thereafter. This fee is not subject to the Childcare Benefit and is payable in cash to the staff on the night of collection. If your child has still not been collected after 6:10pm we will attempt to contact you, then commence ringing your emergency contacts. If we have had no contact and no one arrives to collect your child by 6:30pm then the Police and the Child Care Unit - Tasmania will be contacted. Please be aware that the centre is only licensed until 6:00pm and therefore late collection is only to be used in an emergency.

Cancellation of Booking

Two weeks notice in writing is required when cancelling your child's booking.

Signing In and Out

On arrival and departure, please ensure that your child is signed in and out of the attendance forms. These are located in the foyer on the right hand side as you enter Poss'M'agic. Simply find your child's name and please fill in all the details accurately for our records. This is vital for your child's security in case of an emergency. For example, during a fire evacuation all children must be accounted for - a child not signed in may be presumed absent and may be missed.

Someone Else is to Collect your Child

If either parent cannot collect your child please inform the staff and provide the full name of the person collecting the child. The person collecting the child will be asked to produce photo identification. If you are unavoidably detained and you want someone else to pick up your child you must telephone the centre with the details. Once again, photo ID will be required. Try to make your child aware of any changes when possible.

Only persons over 15 years of age are permitted to collect children from the centre. This person will be required to sign your child out on the attendance form in the foyer.

Under no circumstance will any staff member allow a child to be removed from the centre by an unauthorised person. This is a legal requirement of the Child Care Unit National Standards.

Priority of Access

The Federal and State Government have established guidelines for priority of access, which the centre needs to follow. They are as follows:

First Priority: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect

Second Priority: a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy the work/training/study test under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act (ie. working parents).

Third Priority: any other child

Within these categories are sub sections, which will be acknowledged as necessary.

Staff

Staff photos with their qualifications and rooms are displayed in the foyer. With their professional training and experience they have the enormous responsibility of caring for you precious children. They all appreciate positive feedback from you and are always willing to discuss any matters concerning your child. Confidential matters may require an appointment if staff are busy.

Relief Staff

Our relief staff share the additional hours required to relieve other staff to go to lunch, tea breaks and have program planning. Their hours are flexible and they also cover absences such as sick leave and annual leave. Other casual staff members not listed may work from time to time when needed.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Our Out of School Hours programs are held in the multi purpose room at St Helens District High School. After school care runs during term time, 5 days a week excepting public holidays and student free days. Care is available for 5 to 12 year olds.

Activities

Are your children bored after school hours? Do your commitments make it hard to supervise them? At Poss'M'agic After School Care children can develop new friendships, be creative with planned and spontaneous activities, be active and sporty, and be social, all in a safe and supervised environment.

Hours

After School Care runs from 3:00pm to 6:00pm.

Collection at 3pm

Children can be collected from their classrooms until they are confident enough to make their own way to the Poss'M'agic activity room at the school. Kinder and Prep children will be routinely collected by carers. Please speak to carers if you have any concerns. It is extremely important to let Poss'M'agic know if your child is not attending as we are required to account for all children booked into care.

Fees

Our full fees are: \$22.00 per session

We request that all fees are paid one week in advance.

Sessions booked and then cancelled are charged as per normal.

Most families will have fees substantially reduced by the application of CCB. Parents should register with Centrelink (phone the Family Assistance line on 136150) and provide them with your details for After School Care.

Phone

Parents can contact the After School Care program from 3-6pm on mobile (0439 561 208) or contact Poss'M'agic during business hours on 63761645 to discuss fees or bookings.

Food

Please ensure your child has sufficient food for afternoon tea as we do not routinely supply food.

What to Bring

Each child may bring a hat for outside activities (broad brimmed or legionnaires style), otherwise Poss'M'agic will supply a hat.

VACATION CARE

Our Vacation Care programs are held in the multi purpose room at St Helens District High School and operates during the main school term breaks. Care is available for 5 to 12 year olds.

Activities

Vacation care children will have the support to learn and discover, be active and manage risks, care for each other, learn to work and cooperate together in an environment full of fun.

Hours

Vacation Care runs from 8:00am to 6:00pm Monday - Friday.

Collection

All children must be signed into and out of care by an adult. It is extremely important to let Poss'M'agic know if your child is not attending as we re required to account for all children booked into care.

Enrolment

Please ensure that your enrolment details are up to date.

Fees

Daily: 8am - 6pm	\$65.00	Morning: 8am - 1pm	\$55.00
Weekly: 5 full days	\$300.00		

We request that all fees are paid one week in advance.

All cancellations will be charged as per the normal fee. This will apply to sessions booked and then cancelled.

Most families will have fees substantially reduced by the application of CCB. Parents should register with Centrelink (phone the Family Assistance line on 136150).

Phone

Parents can contact the Vacation Care program during opening hours on mobile (0439 561 208) or contact Poss'M'agic during business hours on 63761645 to discuss fees or bookings.

Food

Lunch and snacks are not provided. Please ensure that your child has sufficient food for the entire day. There will be a selection of fruit available for morning tea.

What to Bring

Poss'M'agic will supply each child with a hat or they may bring their own broad brimmed or legionnaires style hat and wear clothing suited to a day's activities and the weather.

LONG DAY CARE

Hours

The centre is open weekdays from 8:00am until 6:00pm. The centre is closed *Gazetted Public Holidays*. Families are not charged a gap fee for those days.

Care Offered

Full Time - 5 days per week in the one week

Part Time - Less than 5 days per week, same days each week

Casual - Subject to availability

A Place for All

It is our policy that all children are welcomed regardless of race, gender, religion, culture or abilities (so long as care can be offered safely).

We aim for the integration and inclusion of all children. We can assist with accessing support services for those children who require them. All children in our care will be treated respectfully and consistently with regard to each child's individual needs.

Our philosophy and policies have been developed in consultation with staff and parents. They are available in the office for staff and parents. Evaluation of these documents, by staff, parents and the management committee, takes place annually. New policies are displayed in the foyer for comment prior to final ratification.

Fees

Full Time Weekly (5 days in one week):	\$320.00
Daily: 8am - 6pm	\$70.00
Short Day: 8am - 3pm	\$59.00
Morning or afternoon session: 8am - 1pm/1pm-6pm	\$48.00
Hourly rate:	\$14.00

We request that all fees are paid one week in advance.

The above mentioned fees are charged to families who do not apply for *Childcare Assistance*.

What to Bring

Clothing

Please provide a complete change of clothes for your child on each day of attendance. More than one change may be required for children currently toilet training or those partial to water play. Children's clothes that become soiled will be returned home in a plastic bag. Remember to mark your child's clothing and that it's important that your child is comfortable and their clothing is weather appropriate. Also remember your children are very busy during their day and tend to get very messy and dirty, please consider this when dressing your child.

Toys

Children may bring comfort toys to the centre particularly for sleep or rest time. The centre, however, is not responsible for the loss or damage incurred to any toys. Please do not send expensive or loved items that will be missed, as it is sometimes difficult to keep track of toys and loss may cause distress to the child.

Nappies, Creams, Bottles and Dummies

At Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre we require you to supply our own nappies for your child. We request that you provide your child's nappy rash lotion clearly named for your child's individual use. This will prevent cross infection of rash. For hygiene purposes, all bottles and dummies must be clearly labelled.

Other Items

- Gumboots for outside play in wet weather
- Coats and beanies on cold days
- Sun hats - these are provided by Poss'M'agic
- Sunscreen is provided by the centre. If your child has sensitive skin to sunscreen products you will need to provide your own labelled sunscreen.

Labels for food & drink containers or baby bottles

Attached to this information handbook is a sample of write on labels. Use these labels to name your child's food & drink containers. If you need to purchase more labels the details are also attached for your convenience.

Settling In

All children need a chance to settle in. They all react to situations in different ways. This may be an equally difficult time for parents. We have an orientation process which involved parents and their child spending time at the centre in the child's room. This is done over several 1 hour visits. Parents are encouraged to spend time with their children at the centre then build up to leaving them alone for the hour.

Please don't hesitate to call staff at any time if you are concerned. It is important that you say goodbye to your child. Relax and show confidence and your child will feel more at ease. It can be very distressing to a child if he/she does not understand where the parent is, or does not realise they are gone. Disappearing without warning and lingering after goodbyes can confuse your child and result in them being less willing to accept you're leaving tomorrow or the next time.

Programs

The rooms have the following names:

Minis: 6 weeks to 3 years

Majors: 3 years to 5 years

Each room in the centre has a set routine which covers approximate times for activities such as meals, nappy changes; sleep and so on. Routines will vary from time to time according to the needs of the group and individual children.

The room leaders in each room are responsible for planning an early childhood program which encompasses child centred, anti-bias and multi-cultural experiences, is developmentally appropriate and emerges from the children's observed interests. Staff observe each individual child on a regular basis recording these observations and using them to develop individual objectives for each child. These are then incorporated into the overall group programme of activities for each child. A wide variety of early childhood curriculum and developmental areas are provided for within the indoor and outdoor play environments including cognitive, physical (gross and fine motor), social and emotional development, language and literature, art and craft, music, science, maths and number, drama, movement and dance and construction.

Parents are welcome to discuss their child's development at any time by making an appointment with the room leader who plans for their child.

Food and Meals

The centre adopts a "Healthy Food Policy". This means that all food provided by yourself to give to your child should be wholesome and nourishing. If your child has a special diet or develops an allergy after you have enrolled please remember to tell the staff. The centre will provide fruit, biscuits and cheese for the children at morning tea. Milk is also provided by the centre.

The centre actively encourages and promotes healthy eating habits for all children. Parents will periodically be given information and advice about good nutrition, including recommendations about the sort of food to send with their child.

Microwave and refrigerator facilities are available. Food storage containers must be unbreakable and clearly labelled.

Parents are not to send in any lollies, chocolate, potato crisps or 'junk food' in general.

Parents are advised to follow the centre's Nutrition Policy as outlined in the Policy Handbook. Milk or dairy foods not eaten will be placed in the fridge.

Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre Policies and Procedures

Sun Smart Policy

Our aim with this policy is:

-) To promote sun protection guidelines for children, staff and parents.
-) To encourage all children to be dressed appropriately and safely.

Sunscreen doesn't block out the ultraviolet radiation, therefore sun hats must be worn by the children at all times when outside. Poss'M'agic will provide a wide brimmed hat for your child in summer and a beanie for winter. We adopt a NO HAT - PLAY IN THE SHADE POLICY - whereby children without hats remain under shaded areas while outdoors. Sunscreen is provided by the centre and if your child has any allergies we ask that you bring your own. Sunscreen needs to be applied to your child prior to the coming into the centre in the mornings during summer months, this is to ensure that the 20 minute time frame recommended by the Cancer Council is adhered to. During the summer we will often take the children outside straight away and this does not allow for the 20 minute time frame if applied at the centre.

As per Cancer Council guidelines, we recommend that, during summer months, children and staff do not wear sleeveless items of clothing. Singlets are not acceptable attire according to the latest skin cancer research.

Birthdays

All your children's birthdays are important and we love to celebrate. We are happy for you to bring in cake to celebrate but please ensure it has a full list of all ingredients, this is very important for children who have allergies. Feel free to come and join in on the day to sing happy birthday and celebrate at the centre.

Students

Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre is not just a place of learning for younger children, but we welcome students from local secondary colleges on work experiences and university/TAFE students on placement. We feel we are a community organisation and we encourage and involve the community in our activities.

Illness

It is centre policy that sick children do not attend the centre. If your child is sick, he/she requires the care and comfort of loving parents in their home environment.

When to keep your child at home:

-) High temperature
-) Diarrhoea
-) Vomiting
-) Severe skin rash/infection
-) Productive cough (mucus)
-) Excessive discharge from eyes/nose/ears
-) Conjunctivitis
-) Tonsillitis
-) Chicken Pox
-) Diphtheria
-) Mumps
-) Whooping Cough
-) Head Lice
-) Scabies
-) Measles
-) Rubella
-) Cold Sores
-) Ring Worm
-) Impetigo
-) Hand, foot and mouth
-) Infectious Hepatitis
-) If your child is not immunised they will need to be kept home when there is an outbreak of childhood infectious diseases

Medication

Strict policies have been developed to protect your child from incorrect administering of medication. All medication both natural and over the counter medications are required to have a chemist's dispensing label attached with the child's name, dosage and instructions for administering the medication, or a letter from your GP stating the above information.

Please ask the room supervisor for a medication form to fill in, ensure this is filled in correctly (be specific) otherwise medication cannot be administered by staff. A staff member will administer the medication and sign the medication form, another staff member will witness and sign that the correct child, medication and dose was given.

Ensure that the medication is handed to staff and not left in your child's bag. Please also remember to collect the medication and sign the form at the end of the day.

Staff will not administer any medication to a child without written parental instructions and chemist label as above.

Accidents

Minor injuries will be recorded on an incident/accident form located within each room, which details the nature of the incident and action taken. Parents will be informed of the accident when collecting their child and asked to sign the form.

In the case of serious illness or accident, centre staff will attempt to contact the parents or guardians immediately. It is therefore important that the contact number you provide on the enrolment form is correct, and updated when necessary. If a child's condition requires urgent medical attention an ambulance will be called to transport the child to the casualty section of the nearest hospital and the child's parents will be contacted and advised to meet the child there. A staff member well known to the child will accompany the child if the parent is unable to.

If the condition of the child is not urgent but nonetheless requires medical attention, eg a cut which is no longer bleeding but may need stitches, then every effort will be made to contact the child's parents so they may come and take the child to hospital or to a medical practitioner. However, if the child's parents are not contactable, then a staff member will take the child to hospital and emergency contacts will be made for the collection of the child.

Please be aware that the staff take all precautions to prevent accidents or injuries from occurring. We believe that prevention is better than cure!

First Aid

At our centre, we aim to provide the highest quality care. As an important part of this goal, we need to ensure that children in our care receive prompt and appropriate first aid treatment and attention in the event of them injuring themselves. One staff per room must ensure they have a current First Aid certificate and a current CPR certificate where applicable. Phone numbers of emergency services are to be kept next to the phone and in each room.

Immunisation

It is the policy of the centre that all children, except those with a statutory declaration or medical conditions prohibiting it, must be immunised according to the Government Immunisation schedule. Up-to-date immunisation records or a doctor's letter stating the reason for non-immunisation must be shown to the Director when registering at the centre. If a family has difficulty in obtaining evidence of immunisation, or if it is not possible to obtain evidence, a statutory declaration that the child is fully immunised must be obtained. Please be aware of exclusion policies if your child is not immunised in the event of any outbreak.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

The staff from each room is familiar with the emergency evacuation procedure specific for that room. The evacuation procedure is available for parental perusal in the Centre Policy Folder. In the event of an evacuation each child will be accounted for using the sign in sheets and daily room rolls and evacuated to a safe place. It is therefore extremely important that the sign in sheet is completed correctly. Emergency reinforcement will be called upon in such a situation. Children will regularly practice emergency evacuation drills so they are familiar with the process in the event of an evacuation being required.

Behaviour Management

Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre has a policy regarding guiding behaviour which encourages children to co-operate, enhance their self-esteem and encourages their ability to interact with others. Staff, by using a positive approach in guidance, will recognise why a child behaves in a certain way and encourage more acceptable forms of behaviour. The Positive Guiding of Children's Behaviour policy is consistent throughout the centre, so children are aware of expectations as they move up in age groups. Staff will help children to be aware of limits and understand the reasons why these limits exist. Staff will develop each child's ability to make decisions and direct themselves. Staff will be sensitive to each child's abilities and use appropriate language to their level of understanding.

The staff will support and guide children in positive behaviour with clear, consistent guidelines including;

-) Giving praise when co-operative and generous actions have been made;
-) Encouraging children to express themselves to others when upset or hurt;
-) Diverting the child's attention and frustration if necessary;
-) Providing a space children can retreat to if need be;
-) Giving children strategies to use in a conflict or frustrated situations; and
-) Supporting the children in speaking up and then listening to them

The Positive Guiding of Children's Behaviour policy is detailed in the policy folder. Please give us any feedback you may have.

Children with Additional Needs

We regard all children as special and requiring attention, and will endeavour to meet any specific or particular needs your child may have. We will make every effort to cater for children with additional needs where staffing allows. All children will be treated equally and receive personal attention.

Excursions and Transport

Excursions are occasionally planned to extend your child's knowledge of the community and also to provide opportunities to extend their learning to enhance their day. Room Leaders will send out a permission note a minimum of one week prior to the date of the excursion. If you do not want your child to attend an excursion an arrangement will be made for the child to join another group staying at the Centre. The cost of the excursion will be included on the note.

We believe that children should feel safe and secure when being transported by bus, and families should feel confident that children are being well supervised and safe at all times. We will ensure each child travelling on the bus has a signed consent for to do so and ensure seat belts are in use at all times if available when travelling.

Child Protection

Child Protection gives clear and specific guidelines regarding child protection issues. In accordance with the guidelines the staff are trained to recognize the signs of possible child abuse and it is mandatory as Early Childhood Professionals to report any incidents of suspected abuse to the Department of Community Services & Health. Parents should be made aware that it is mandatory for staff at Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre to report to the relevant authorities any physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect if they have reasonable ground for believing this to be the case.

Call Community Health & Services on 1300 737 639 if you have doubts about the safety or well being of any child.

Non-English Speaking Children

Children who have a non-English speaking background or other cultural differences will be welcomed into the centre. The staff will regard each child with the same respect as all other children and will make a special effort in working in conjunction with parents to facilitate your child's language development. We will endeavour to provide translation services for parents as required.

Custody and Access

Please inform the Director if any custody/access difficulties arise. The centre requires, in this situation, a copy of current court orders. It is a parent's responsibilities to notify the Director of any changes to court orders. Access to children will only be given where the legal guardian has provided written authorisation i.e. as per enrolment form.

Complaints

The relationship between staff and families is one of the key components in the development of a sense of belonging and caring which is central to the vision and philosophy of the centre. In order to enhance and preserve this relationship any complaints, concerns or differences of opinion need to be dealt with. This will allow for quick resolution and minimal disruption to the day to day running of the centre. If you have any concerns about the centre or the quality of care your child is receiving, please don't hesitate to contact the Director on 03 6376 1645. When brought to our attention, concerns will be discussed and everything possible will be done to resolve them. For further details refer to the Complaints Policy and Procedures.

The Poss'M'agic Committee President - Cassey Wood can also be contacted on 0407 811 565

Confidentiality

The centre protects the privacy and confidentiality of individuals by ensuring that all records and information about individual children, families, staff and management are kept in a secure place and are only accessed by or disclosed to those people who need the information to fulfil their responsibilities at the centre or have a legal right to know.

Personal information will only be collected in so far as it relates to the service's activities and functions, and in line with relevant legislation.

Policy Manual

The centre policy and procedure manual is available for you at any time being located in the foyer. If you have any queries or ideas about any of our policies, please talk to the Director. Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre welcomes feedback on our policies and requests parents review and comment on the policies displayed each month in the foyer for review.

Committee of Management

Poss'M'agic is a community based child care centre and we encourage all families to join our Committee of Management. The Committee meets once a month to discuss exciting events and upcoming goals for the centre and children alike. Without the Committee of Management the centre cannot run and we therefore encourage you to come along and share an hour of your time where you can make a difference in creating a wonderful place for your children to play and be educated in, as well as cared for to the highest of quality. We look forward to hearing from you soon. Please speak to the Director if you are interested in joining the Committee.

On behalf of the Committee of Management and all of the staff at Poss'M'agic Child Care Centre we thank you for your continued support. Thank you once again for choosing us to care for your child/children. We look forward to a long and happy association with your family.