

# Welcome to Freckles!

We welcome you and your child to what we trust will be an extension of your home. By working together, we will provide an environment that promotes high quality care and education to the individual child. Should you require translation of this Handbook, we will endeavour to provide this service.

We would like to acknowledge that we are providing our service of education and care today on the land of the Bundjalung people who are the Traditional Custodians of this land. We would also like to pay respect to the Elders both past and present and extend respect to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who now reside in this area and who are present in our service each day.

## Freckles Kindy & Learning Centre Philosophy

### In respect of children we believe:

- Children are our first priority
- In providing a happy, caring, safe environment that nurtures children's individuality, allowing them to "*...develop interests and construct their own identities and understandings of the world.*" (EYLF p7)
- A play based program not only allows for active learning where children are able to construct knowledge that helps them make sense of their world, but enhances the opportunities for children to experience *Belonging, Being and Becoming and My Time, Our Place* for school aged children.
- In promoting respect for each child's physical wellbeing in regards to health, hygiene, nutrition and safety and understand that play is integral in children having a strong sense of wellbeing.
- In embracing their right to grow without any bias towards gender, religion, culture and nurturing a strong sense of identity

### In respect of families we believe in:

- Welcoming the uniqueness of each family and the values they have for their children, which are both cultural and social.
- Developing a genuine partnership which is characterised by:  
*" valuing each other's knowledge of each child  
valuing each other's contributions to and roles in each child's life  
trusting each other  
communicating freely and respectfully with each other  
sharing insights and perspectives about each child  
engaging in shared decision-making." (EYLF, p12) (My Time Our Place, p10)*
- Providing support to assist families to balance their work and family life.
- Forming a link with other families and early childhood professionals and services.

**In respect of the staff we believe in:**

- Working as a team, developing respect and trust for each other's knowledge and skills in a supportive environment.
- Fostering a sense of job fulfillment in each team member.
- Encouraging each team member to continue to develop knowledge, skills and pedagogical practices

**In respect of Kersten Investments Pty Ltd we believe in:**

- Developing and maintaining a co-operative and professional partnership with management, which includes sharing information on events and programs in addition to developing policies and improvement plans.

**In respect of the community we believe in:**

**Acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the Bundjalung Land on which we are fortunate to be providing education and care for young children, ensuring respect for diversity, an understanding of reconciliation and the importance of Belonging.**

- Contributing to the sense of community in the Tweed Heads area and providing a role model for others.
- Providing a link for families to all community services.
- Respecting diversity and ensuring our practices recognise the needs of all members of the community.

**In respect of the Early Childhood Profession we believe in:**

- Providing a role model for a high quality service that embraces and reflects the Early Years Learning Framework , My Time Our Place, National Quality Standards and aspects of High Scope.
- Networking with other services to ensure high quality care and education.

**In respect of Sustainability we believe in:**

- At Freckles Kindy and Learning Centre we value the importance of educating the children on the land of the Bundjalung people to be future stewards of the earth.
- We believe that educating children about sustainable living and environments will develop a lifelong sense of Belonging, Being and Becoming.

All services in Australia are now govern by the National Quality Standards and undertake an Assessment and Rating cycle regularly. Freckles participated in the National Assessment and Rating Cycle in September 2013. **Freckles is rated as an EXCEEDING CENTRE.**

Freckles Kindy & Learning Centre strives to provide the highest quality care for families and their children. We provide an environment that is safe secure, happy and nurturing where all feel welcomed and valued. We believe that children are unique individuals and should be treated as such and care shall be provided for all regardless of sex, economic, cultural or social status.

All interactions with staff, children, families and community members will be positive and professional. Families and community are important to us here as we see them as a valuable asset and a wealth of knowledge that can enhance our vision of excellence in education. We value and invite all contributions from family or community members. Our aim is to communicate with all effectively through positive interactions and various forms of media (newsletters, programs, daily diaries, communications books, portfolios etc) and conversations. All staff is approachable at all times and welcomes any contributions that are offered (big or small).

It is our aim to provide learning experiences that are flexible to meet the needs of individuals and/or groups of children (big or small). We challenge children in creative and exciting ways to help develop/enhance their problem solving skills. Children are encouraged to express themselves freely and creatively through play and/or age appropriate activities that will help build/enhance their self help skills, independence and confidence. This is the start of a long journey of learning and we aim to provide a foundation for learning that prepares them for the years ahead.

Our program creatively encourages, develops and enhances all Outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework –

- 1. Children have a strong sense of identity;***
- 2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world;***
- 3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing;***
- 4. Children are confident and involved learners;***
- 5. Children are effective communicators.***

We cater for children with additional needs by constantly enhancing staff's awareness & knowledge in specific areas by professional development and referral to appropriate professionals in our community. Learning is a life long journey and our staff are always upgrading their skills and knowledge to enable us to provide the best possible care and education for children and families.

## Family Communication

Freckles communicate with families on a daily basis. After a successful trial period we are now sending all daily reports home to families via Email with KINDY HUB. Daily you will receive emails with photos and an overview of your child's room for each day. Development records such as observations and learning stories are also sent in this manner. Kindy Hub replaces all paper portfolios. If you do not have access to a daily email account we can print out the daily report for your family.

The initiative to move to Kindy Hub was based on sustainable practices and a greater sharing of information that families can read at their own leisure and keep. You can download the KindyHub app to your phone to access the daily reports, photos and journey of learning records.

## Kindy Now

Families download the Kindy Now app and can manage their bookings when your child will be absent or if you would like to book an extra day. There is a 2 week window where bookings can be made. If another family books your absent day, then you receive a discount. <http://www.kindynow.com/>

## Centre Policies:

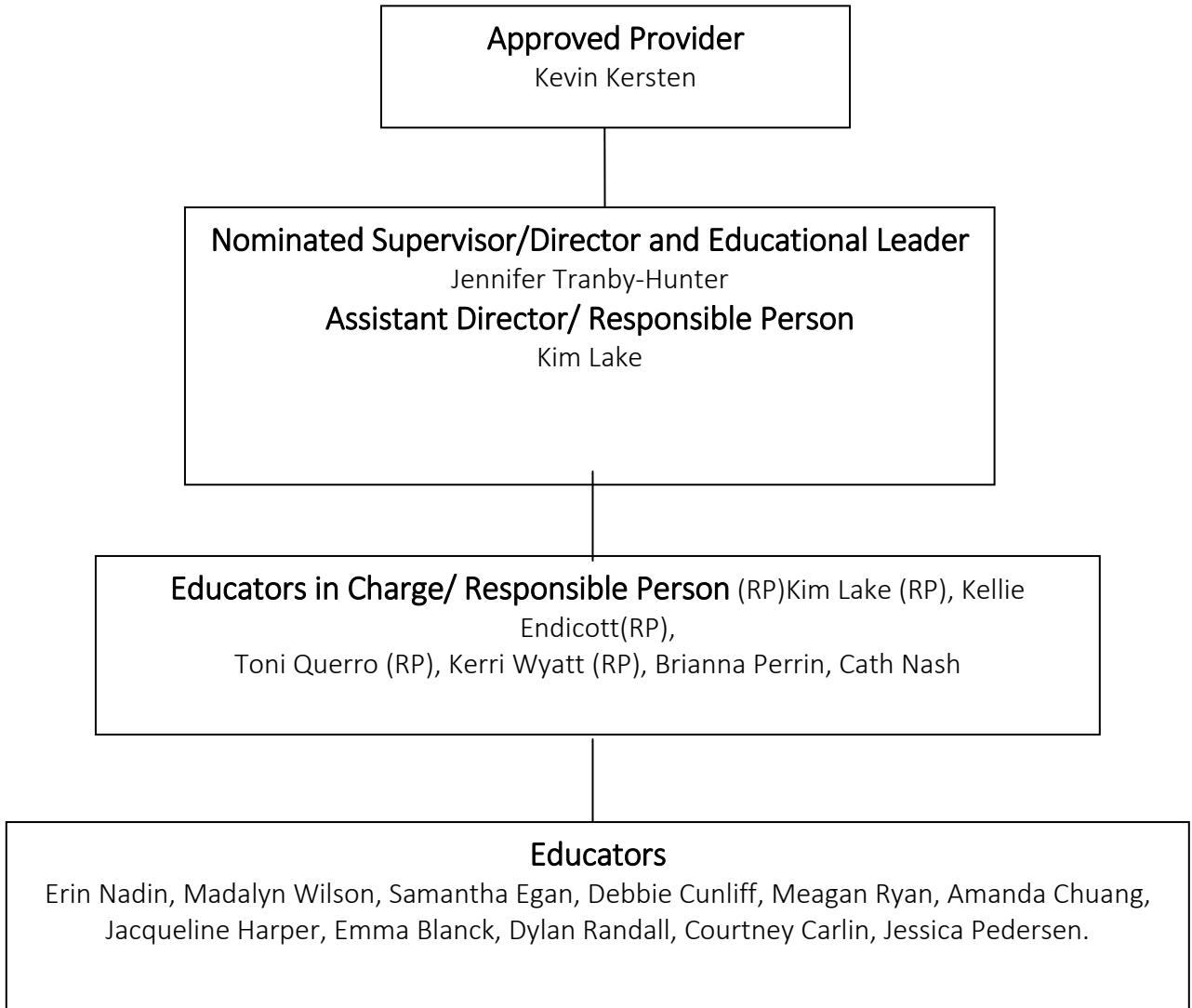
The centre policy folder is available in the foyer for families to view. The policies found within this folder are reviewed annually or as the need arises. It is a working document that requires input from all stake holders involved in Freckles Kindy and Learning Centre. Stake Holders include: Families – Parent and Guardians, Approved Provider- Kevin Kersten, Nominated Supervisor – Jennifer Tranby-Hunter, all Educators, Community Members and other Education and Care Professionals and the children.

As we are committed to sustainability we will email all policies to families during orientation and as requested. If you do not have an available email, we can supply the policies to you on a USB device. Hard copies are always available in the foyer and copies can be made if needed.

# Management

Freckles is owned and managed by a Private Approved Provider, Kevin Kersten. The following Management structure outlines the staffing currently at Freckles.

## Management Structure



## Staff Information

Our Centre has a policy of employing staff that have been approved by the Commission for Children and Young People, through a Working with Children Check which is conducted by the Commission. Our staff are encouraged to participate in professional development in order to broaden and upgrade their skills.

The Director is responsible for the overall management of the Centre. The Centre maintains correct staffing ratios as defined by the Educational and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

Freckles has University trained Early Childhood Teachers on staff that hold a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education. Educators are appropriately trained in providing care and education programs in early childhood settings. Programs are continually evaluated to ensure they meet the EYLF outcomes, interests and developmental needs of the children in the group. All staff hold current First Aid and C.P.R. Certificate, Responsible Person all have training in Anaphylaxis and Asthma. Additional staff may be employed to assist children with Additional Needs when funding is available.

## Students, Volunteers and Visitors

From time to time, you will see new faces at the centre. Relief staff and volunteers are screened before participating in our daily activities and must adhere to our philosophy and policies & procedures whilst at the Centre. At no stage will a volunteer worker be left in charge of a group of children. However, they will interact with the children and are a welcome part of the centre programme.

## Family Partnerships

We operate an OPEN DOOR POLICY, where parents and family are welcome into the Centre at ANYTIME. What this means is that we develop genuine partnerships with the families, we respect that families are children's first and most influential teachers. We will actively collaborate with families about curriculum decisions to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful.

EYLF (p 12)

*"In genuine partnerships, families and early childhood educators:*

- *Value each other's knowledge of each child*
- *Value each other's contributions to and roles in each child's life*
- *Trust each other*
- *Communicate freely and respectfully with each other*
- *Share insights and perspectives about each child*
- *Engage in shared decision making"*

Siblings are always welcome in our Centre when children are being dropped off or picked up, however, the staff cannot assume responsibility for them.

## Family Concerns

Parents are requested to raise any concerns they may have regarding their child's care with the child's Educator in the first instance. Speaking to the Director if the concern has not been satisfactorily resolved should follow this up. The Director will be pleased to discuss any aspect of your child's care and education. If you have any concerns or complaints please do not hesitate to consult with the Director, so that appropriate action can be taken. All concerns will be dealt with in a confidential and professional manner. If parents would like to contact Kevin Kersten about any unresolved or sensitive issue they may phone 0438725134 and your concern will be addressed.

## Additional Needs

Before enrolling your child at our Centre, it is important to discuss any additional needs your child might have with us so we can help meet and plan for them. Planning for children with special needs requires careful thought and often the assistance of specialists. It is important to know how the specific needs may or may not affect your child's learning and activities. This information will help us to meet the needs of your child and seek assistance from specialist and support workers.

Please help us provide quality care for your child by bringing to our attention any special needs your child may have.

## Centre Opening Hours

The Centre is opened from 6.30am till 6.30 pm, Monday to Friday.

We are open 52 weeks a year only closing on public holidays.

## Age Groupings

- **Babies** Birth – 2 years
- **Toddlers** 2 years – 3 years
- **Kindy** 3 years – 4 years
- **Pre School** 3 years - 5 years

# Fees

## Long Day Care

	Daily Fee
Babies	\$ 97.00
Toddlers	\$ 97.00
Preschool	\$ 87.00
Before School Care	\$ 24.00
After School Care	\$ 26.00
Vacation Care	\$ 87.00

## Sign in and Out

It is a requirement in the Child Care Regulations that a responsible adult is to sign and write their name when signing children in and out on a daily basis. Sign in sheets are located in the playrooms.

## Centre Fees

On enquiry at the Centre, you will be given information outlining the fee structure and the method of payment. The method of payment for all enrolments is using Direct Debit, a system that directly debits your fees from an account you nominate or Centrepay. If you have trouble paying your fees, please do not hesitate to contact the Director as we may be able to help. We require advance notice of 2 weeks of any cancellation/change to your booking to enable us to fill the place in good time. Full Fees may be charged in lieu of notice. To aid in the payment of childcare fees, the Family Assistance Office (FAO) has provided access to Child Care Benefits. Registering with your local Family Assistance Office can activate this. We also advise that families nominate their Child Care Rebate be paid directly to the service, as this relieves the financial burden of paying the full gap fee each week. Parents, please note it is your responsibility to apply for these schemes and to follow the relevant guidelines.

## Child Care Benefits

Child Care Benefit is a subsidy provided by the Commonwealth Government to approved long day child care centres, family day care schemes, registered carers, outside school hour's programs and occasional care services. This subsidy is then used to reduce the amount that parents are required to pay to the Centre. Parents may apply for Child Care Benefits through their local Family Assistance Office. Child Care Benefits are based on each family's income and the onus is on each family to ensure they have a current assessment



notice in order to receive the benefit. Full fees will be charged if you do not have a current assessment. In order to receive Child Care Benefits, parents **must sign** each of their children **in and out EVERY day** they attend care. On return to the centre after any absence, parents also must sign the attendance sheets indicating a reason why the child was away to ensure that Child Care Benefits is given during the absence.

## Allowable Absences

Allowable absences occur when your service can charge a fee for care and claim Child Care Benefits when the child is not present. All families will be eligible for 42 days of allowable absences and absences caused by holidays or illness without a medical certificate. In addition, Child Care Benefits will be paying for all absences due to:

- Illness (with a medical certificate)
- Attendance at pre-school
- Pupil free days
- Rostered days off
- Rotating shift work

If a child is absent for over the 42 allowable absence per year, full fees are payable for that day.

## Late Fee

We ask for your co-operation in dropping off and collecting your children within our operating hours. If at any time you have an emergency and are going to be delayed, please contact the Centre. Staff can then put at ease your child's concerns and make plans for their own commitments. A late fee will apply if your child is left at the centre after closing time. The late fee is not subject to Child Care Benefits.

## Public Holidays

It is our policy that fees are payable for the days that your child is booked into the Centre. If a public holiday falls on one of the days your child is booked in, fees are still payable even though the Centre is not open.

## Attendance

A responsible adult( over 18 years of age) known to the Director and staff must bring children into the Centre. Only authorised persons (as indicated on the enrolment form) will be allowed to collect children from the Centre, identification (preferably photographic) may be asked for if staff are unfamiliar with the person collecting your child. Please notify the director either verbally or with a written note of any changes regarding the adult who is collecting your child. An adult other than one known to the centre requires identification (photographic). Parents with custody orders must provide a copy to the Director.

In the case of non custodial parent arriving to collect the child, the Director will contact the police and provide the copy of the order for the police to enforce. On no account will a child be allowed to go home with a parent/guardian in contravention of a custody/court order held at the Centre. Such custody/court orders should be brought to the director's attention on enrolment. However, in the event of a non custodial parent gaining access to a child, the Centre can not be held liable.

Staff are always concerned about your child's welfare, so if you are aware of any intending absence could you please inform the Director and/or staff. It is our policy that fees are payable for the days that your child is booked into the Centre regardless or if they attend or not.

## Escorted Journeys

The Centre has one bus; it is inspected by Department of Transport every six months. Each child will have available a seat belt when on the bus. The bus has regular services and is kept in a road worthy state at all times. The bus has a fire hydrant on board. The bus service is provided free to families **WHO DO NOT HAVE TRANSPORT** to and from Freckles. The bus pick up and drop off times vary day to day and it is your responsibility to be waiting outside your house between the times specified by the bus driver. Places on the bus are limited and will be discussed upon enrolment as required. Parents must sign their children onto and off the bus.

The Centre has a before and after school group by where the Centre drops children to school and then collects them from school.

# What to bring

## ***Babies (birth – 2 years)***

Parents of babies need to bring the following items in a bag:

1. Enough nappies for the day
2. Enough bottles for the day, milk/water
3. Enough **healthy** food for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea - including 1 piece of fruit.
4. 2 Complete spare sets of clothes
5. Items of comfort value to your child, ie dummy, teddy bear, etc
6. Sunhat
7. Insect Repellant
8. Sunscreen

## ***Toddlers (2 years – 3 years)***

Parents of toddlers need to bring the following items in a bag:

1. Enough nappies for the day
2. Enough **healthy** food for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea - including 1 piece of fruit
3. Complete spare set of clothes, at least 2 sets
4. Items of comfort value to your child, ie dummy, teddy bear, etc
5. Sunhat
7. Insect Repellant
8. Optional - Sheet (blanket for cooler months) in material bag eg: pillowcase

## ***Kindy (3yrs – 4yrs) & Preschool (3yrs – 6yrs)***

Parents of children in these age groups need to bring the following items in a bag:

1. Enough food for lunch, morning and afternoon tea - including 1 piece of fruit
2. Sheet in a material bag eg: pillowcase
3. Drink bottle - preferably containing water
4. Sunhat
5. Insect Repellant
6. 2 changes of clothes

Do not send children in good clothing. Please send children in play clothes that can become a little dirty, that enable uninhibited play and that can be easily managed by your child. Children should be dressed according to climate, for example, light cotton clothing that will provide protection from the sun and sandals are best in summer. In cooler months, warmer clothing layers that can be taken off as the day warms up, with shoes and socks, are most appropriate. Hats need to be brought and worn throughout the year. A NO HAT, NO OUTSIDE PLAY policy will be enforced and children without hats will miss out on outdoor playing times. Please ensure all items brought to the Centre are CLEARLY LABELLED/MARKED. Whilst all care is taken, we will not accept liability for loss or damage.

## Implementation of Programs/Routines

Freckles is committed to the Early Years Learning Framework as the foundation for their program, however we also implement aspects of High Scope in our program. High Scope is very compatible to the Early Years Learning Framework and we have found many aspects that compliment both systems. High Scope is a program that originated in USA that allows children to be decision makers, problem solvers and manage their learning. The staff program for intentional teaching through small groups which develop skills and extend upon the children's interests. The routine is consistent and the children have the opportunity to plan and evaluate their day through conversations with their educators and planning times.

## Encouraging Good Hygiene Practices

Staff model and encourage children to develop personal hygiene through washing hands after play, toileting, nose blowing, patting animals and before eating. Children are encouraged to cover their mouth when coughing or sneezing and then washing hands afterwards. Staff use gloves for nappy changing, wiping noses, and administering first aid and in the preparation of food. Staff encourage children on all steps of maintaining good hygiene practices ie hand washing with soap and drying or wiping hands when complete. We encourage families and children to wash their hands on arrival, or use the antibacterial hand gel provided in each room.

## Toileting

Children are encouraged to go to the toilet individually. The toileting procedure is on display in each room. During toilet training, staff will endeavour to support efforts made at home. Please feel free to discuss your child's needs with staff. Hygiene is very important to us, staff clean the toilet and floor areas several times a day and specialists professionally clean the centre daily outside operational hours.

## Nutrition

There is now clear evidence that childhood nutrition has a lasting effect on many aspects of health. Children need fresh, nutritional food and well balanced meals. The guidelines for children's nutritional needs while attending our service is available. It is government policy that services continually provide information to families with regards to nutrition and healthy eating; at times we will also undertake lunch box audits and send home information to support you in providing a balance lunch box for your child. Please support us by making healthy choices when packing your child's lunch and snacks for the day. Recommended foods include, sandwiches, cheese, cold meats, fresh or dried fruit, prepared fruit snacks, savory biscuits, fruit cake, yogurt, milk and water. For more ideas and guidelines, speak to your Director or Educator. The Centre has a **no peanut policy and no eggs policy**, this is due to children previous and current to our service having allergies to peanuts and eggs, please bear this in mind when packing your child's lunch each day.

## Sleep and Quiet Activities Time

All children are required to have a special time for quiet activities or sleep during the day, it enables them to gather their thoughts and strength for the rest of the day. It is our policy that if a child falls asleep, they are in need of a rest and will not be woken unless requested by parents personally. Some children may not need sleep, but will be encouraged to rest their bodies on their mattresses for a short period. Quiet activities will be available for selection after a short time.

## Guiding Children's Behaviour

Our guiding children's behaviour policy is centered around the importance of respect and dignity for the child, acknowledging and accepting children's feelings and encouraging these feelings to be expressed. Steps that we take towards establishing appropriate behavior management include:

- Offering children choices and encouraging decision making
- Involving the children in setting the rules and positive behaviours of their room
- Providing equipment that is age appropriate and discussing with the children safe and positive use of the equipment
- Reinforcing positive behaviour
- Assisting the children in problem solving behaviours that need to be managed and promoting positive guidance by asking the children to assist in determining the outcomes for hurtful or inappropriate behaviour.
- Setting realistic expectations which are age and stage appropriate

*It is often important to remember that what works for one does not always work for all.*

## Incidents/Emergencies

In the event of a minor incident, first aid will be administered by staff and recorded. If a more serious incident occurs or a child falls seriously ill while in attendance, parents will be contacted immediately. Please ensure the Centre has current contact telephone numbers, both for parents and for emergency contact persons. Changes for that day may be left with the Educator. In emergency situations, should the person in charge determine the injuries are serious enough, an ambulance will be called immediately. The parent will incur the cost.

## Emergency and Evacuation Procedures

In case of an unforeseen emergency situation, every effort will be made to contact parents to collect their child. The Centre is fitted with safety devices, which are maintained regularly. Regular fire drills are necessary for regulation purposes. If you are present at a fire drill, you are required by law to participate. Emergency evacuation plans are displayed in the Centre. Staff are familiar with evacuation procedures and policies. Parents and visitors to the centre will be asked to make themselves familiar with the evacuation plan and where hoses and first aid equipment is to be found. Every effort will be made to make evacuation procedures enjoyable rather than stressful events for the children. Regular emergency procedures give the children an opportunity to become familiar with the routine and planned evacuation.

## Safety

Centre policies on safety precautions are continually re-enforced by staff and children. Such practices include:

- The storage of chemicals in locked cupboards
- Checking the safety of sandpits and outdoor equipment
- Children's awareness of personal safety, ie not throwing equipment, walking inside.

## Toys and Other Treasures from Home

We've chosen a wide range of developmentally appropriate equipment and toys for our Centre. It would be appreciated if parents can explain to their children that the toys at the Centre are for everyone to share and that they cannot be taken home. It would be appreciated if your child does not bring toys from home. Cuddly or security toys are welcome but need to be clearly named. If you have any CDs that you would like to have played during rest time, please bring them in and we will be happy to play them for your child.

## Lost Property

At the Centre there is a container for unnamed and lost property. It would be appreciated if parents could check this regularly as the amount builds up. Items that are still uncollected after a period are donated to a local charity.

## Arts and Crafts Material

In our quest to extend each child's imagination and creativity, certain materials are useful. We can use any of the following:

Alfoil	Toothbrushes
Pot plants	Wood off cuts
Cotton reels	Keyboards
Pipe cleaners	Sawdust
Seeds	Old typewriters
Shells	Old calculators/phones
Paper	Old cameras
Any old furniture	Milk bottle tops
Lids	Paddlepop sticks
Sandpaper	Dolls, toys
Sheets	Buttons
Cardboard	Music – tapes, CDs
Hessian	Material scraps
Old radios	Old pots and pans
Wool	Felt
Lace	Wrapping paper
Cardboard boxes	Dress up clothes
Tinsel	Basically anything

Please collect these items for us. They would be much appreciated and well used. Before you throw them out please consider the centre first.

**We are very pleased to have your family join our Freckles community. We look forward to the partnership and a long and happy journey watching your child grow.**

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# PARENT HANDBOOK

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