Mission and Vision Statement

To be a connected community where innovative teaching inspires action and where God’s love is shared and celebrated.

Our Program

The ELC program offers the highly regarded International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Program (PYP) within the ELC program, children are challenged to investigate ideas and develop understandings under the umbrella of a minimum of four broad-based themes which are addressed at each year level of the PYP and considered ‘essential in the context of a program of international education’.

The principles, practices, pedagogy and learning outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia are beautifully interwoven with our IB framework resulting in an exciting and vibrant child-centred, play-based inquiry curriculum.

Session Times / Days

Encounter Lutheran ELC operates Monday to Friday each day during School terms. The Centre operates from 8:30 am - 3:00 pm. After School Care is available between 3:00pm - 5:00pm each day. In the school holidays a “Holiday Care Program” available. This program operates in the ELC from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm daily.

The service is open 48 weeks of the year and is licensed for a maximum of 29 children per session.

Our School Connection

Along with the convenience of being connected with the College, the ELC also offers:
- Visits to the College Library for story time and an opportunity to borrow books
- Use of College play space/gym facilities
- College big buddy time
- Specialist teacher access and expertise

Reception Transition

An additional benefit for your child will be the seamless flow on to College entry.

Being ‘next door’ to the reception classes will enable frequent interaction and sharing.

The initial friendships children form will be maintained throughout the child’s education.

Your child will be acquainted with the reception classrooms and staff.

College entry will be a natural continuum of the nurturing Christian care that is experienced at the Early Learning Centre.
**Priority for allocating places**

Sometimes, there may be a waiting list for child care services and to ensure the system is fair, the Australian Government has 'Priority of Access Guidelines' for allocating places in these circumstances. The guidelines only apply to Child Care Benefit approved child care. They are used when there is a waiting list for a child care service or when a number of parents are applying for a limited number of vacant places.

Every Child Care Benefit approved child care service has to abide by the guidelines and tell you about them when you enrol your child into care.

**Priorities:**
- **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 ‘A New Tax System Family Assistance Act 1999’
- **Third Priority** - Any other child

Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:
- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Children in families which include a disabled person
- Children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold of $43,727 for 2015-2016, or who or whose partner are
- on income support
- Children in families from a non-English speaking background
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents.

A Child Care Service may require a Priority 3 child to vacate a place to make room for a child with a higher priority. They can only do so if you:
- Are notified when your child first entered care that your service follows this policy
- Are given at least 14 days notice of the need for your child to vacate.

Encounter Lutheran College ELC offers a program in Christian Education to all applicants provided that Parents/Carers support the mission and vision of Encounter Lutheran College and that adequate vacancies and resources are available. The Early Learning Centre operates under the Federal Government Child Care Benefit and complies with the ‘Priority of Access’ guidelines. Preference may also be given to children that are enrolled in the College / who have siblings in the College or children aged 4.

**Enrolment Procedure**

Applications for enrolment are received at any time.

A non-refundable enrolment fee of $30 (including GST) is payable on application. The payment of this fee does not guarantee enrolment.

It is suggested that parents send application forms to the College well before the date of admission, as places are limited.

An interview with the Coordinator or Head of Junior School is arranged soon after the preliminary application is received.

Parents are informed as to the acceptance and session times during the term before their child is due to commence at the ELC.

Children are enrolled for a minimum of two days a week and a maximum of 3 days.

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**Child Care Benefit**

The Early Learning Centre is an approved long day care service. Contact the Department of Human Services at [www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.gov.au) or on 136 150 to apply for the Childcare Benefit and/or Childcare Rebate prior to commencing at the Centre.

**Bond**

A bond will be invoiced which represents your first week of bookings. The bond is due and payable prior to the first day of attendance at the Centre. The bond is credited to your final account when you cancel care.

**Paying Accounts**

Accounts will be emailed out weekly and are to be paid weekly via the Direct Debit Payment Plan. Variations of payment options to the Direct Debit Payment Plan must be negotiated with the Finance Officer prior to commencement at the Early Learning Centre.

**Arrival and Departures**

On arrival, sign the attendance sheet, including the time of arrival. If someone other than a parent is collecting your child, please let a staff member know and fill in the appropriate section of the attendance sheet. When collecting your child please sign the attendance sheet, including the time of departure. Children will not be released into the care of anyone unknown to the staff without prior notice from parents.

**Remember**

Please collect your child promptly after a session as children can become upset when parents are late.

If your child has not been collected by 3:00pm they will be signed into the After School Centre.

A late fee of $1.00 per minute applies when the Centre closes at 5.00pm.

**Starting at the ELC**

Your child may feel somewhat anxious about beginning in a new environment. Some children take longer than others to settle, and however much your child may be looking forward to attending the ELC, it will be a new experience. Your child may even begin happily but have anxious moments a few days later or even after several weeks. This separation/change of routine is a major step in your child’s life. Rest assured that the ELC staff are committed to making your child’s transition as smooth as possible. Each session begins with free play so that you may remain with your child and help them settle on a chosen activity. Please speak to a staff member if you have any concerns about your child and his/her needs.
A few important points…

- Never leave without telling your child you are going; your child needs to know that he/she can trust you.
- Please inform us of any significant events that may affect your child’s behavior or emotional well-being.
- You are welcome to enter the Centre at any time to observe your child and view the program in operation.

Toileting

It is a pre-requisite of commencement at the Centre that a child is fully toilet trained. (Pull ups are not able to be used at the Centre). Parents should indicate if their child has a medical condition which makes this requirement difficult or impossible.

What will my child need to bring to a session?

- Fresh or dried fruit for their morning and afternoon snack. ELC staff will be more than happy to cut/peel fresh fruit for your child (no cakes, biscuits, sweets or nut products).
- A drink bottle with your child’s name on it filled with water only
- An Encounter Lutheran College bucket hat with your child’s name on it for outside play (see uniform). Hats must be worn everyday throughout term 1 & 4. We ask that you help your child to remember to bring their hat each session.
- A set of spare clothes in a case of accidents or water play, preferably the uniform or navy pants and a red top to correspond with the uniform.
- Sunscreen should be applied before coming to the ELC. If your child is staying for the full day, sunscreen will be reapplied by the ELC staff for the afternoon session. If your child has sensitive skin, you will need to supply named sunscreen.
- If children attend on a library day they will require a clearly named library bag. Books are borrowed weekly and therefore children may borrow or return at each session.

Please remember to clearly label all of your child’s belongings, even socks! Toys from home should not be brought to the ELC, as they may be lost or broken.

An important aspect of the program is the development of gross motor skills. This is enhanced with clothing that suits the physical activities of jumping, climbing, crawling, hopping, skipping and running in the daily program and free play time. The uniform is based on the College sport uniform while maintaining a sense of uniqueness within the College. Children practice their sports skills daily in the Kondole Centre daily.

Uniform

The Early Learning Centre uniform is compulsory and consists of:

Boys and Girls:
- Summer – Early Learning Centre red polo with plain navy shorts or College sport shorts and sandshoes with white socks.
- Winter – Early Learning Centre red polo with navy shorts or navy track pants and a College sport windcheater. Sandshoes with white socks.

A College bucket hat is mandatory.

Encouraging Healthy Eating (snacks and lunch boxes)

The ELC has a Healthy Eating policy. Please make sure the food you supply is nutritious and healthy. Please make sure your child has a piece of fruit for each session.

The ELC is a nut aware Centre. Some children at the Centre may have severe allergic reaction to nuts/nut products. It is vitally important that no products containing nut are brought into the Centre e.g. peanut butter, Nutella, muesli bars, sesame seed rolls, etc.

Please note that all religious and cultural dietary needs will be respected.

Please inform the staff if your child has a special dietary requirement or a food allergy.

Please ensure your child has a clearly named water bottle each day.

Birthdays are a very special time for children and we enjoy celebrating birthdays at the Centre. Birthday cakes or cupcakes are allowed to be brought to celebrate your child’s birthday however please support our healthy eating policy and ensure they are low in fat and sugar. No food colouring or nuts please.

We are rubbish free Centre supporting sustainable practise, please refrain from sending prepackaged foods or plastic wrapped sandwiches. There is a wide range of alternatives available such as compartment lunch boxes and reusable cloth sandwich bags.

Medication/Illness

Parents whose child needs oral medication administered throughout the day need to deliver the medication accompanied by written and signed instructions from a medical practitioner to an ELC staff member on arrival. Please note that analgesics, including painkillers such as paracetamol or aspirin products, will not be provided by the Centre. If your child develops headaches or other pains, you will be contacted as soon as possible. Please do not send a sick child to the Centre. If a child vomits in the morning before a session or the previous night, please keep them home for the day even if they want to come! Thank you for your understanding.
Absences
Please inform the ELC when your child will be absent. You may ring the College office on 8552 8880 or the Early Learning Centre mobile phone 0419 414 298 and leave a message or let us know directly. It may also be important that we know why your child is absent.

Parent Participation / Volunteer
Parents are welcome and encouraged to be involved at the ELC. Helping at the Centre is a great way to get to know the staff and find out just what your child is doing! You may like to help out in one of the following ways:
- Work with the children (e.g. Share your special interest, occupation or hobby)
- Help with small group projects
- Help prepare teaching materials
All people working and volunteering in the Centre are required to have a Police Check and attend a volunteer training workshop with the College Principal. This is free of cost for all volunteers. Please check at the College office for current procedures.

Behavior Management Policy
At Encounter Lutheran, behavior management is based on four guiding principles:
- We care for each other
- We work well together
- We act safely
- We look after property and equipment
Where a child’s behavior falls outside of these principles, a gentle reminder will be given and logical consequences will follow where necessary. We may also let you know when this happens so that you are able to follow up and talk about this with your child if/when necessary.

Remember
Please come and talk to us if you have any concerns about your child’s behavior/interactions with others. A full copy of our Behavior Management Policy is available for your perusal in the Centre’s policy folder.

Please feel free to ring the Centre to ask questions, at any time.

ELC Mobile Phone Number: 0419 414 298