

# Q and A for prospective families

At IGS Early Learning, our qualified, dedicated and passionate teachers and educators love what they do. We nurture each child's curiosity, self-discovery and creativity in an environment rich in languages, music and vibrant opportunities. Together, we embrace diversity and celebrate personal achievement.

We offer a diverse and stimulating program, supporting each child to reach their full potential using the Early Years Learning Framework as the foundation of our curriculum and practices in the Centre together with the unique IGS Language and Music programs. We are licensed by the Department of Education and meet all 7 quality areas of the National Quality Standards relating to quality early education and care.

## Visiting the Early Learning Centre

### **Q: I would like to see the IGS Early Learning Centre in action. Can I visit the Centre?**

A: We currently offer small group tours of the Early Learning Centre. Please be aware that you must have already attended a Virtual Early Learning information session prior to booking an in-centre tour. Register your interest for both of these opportunities on the [IGS website](#).

### **Q: How else can I see inside the Centre?**

A: We warmly invite you to [register](#) for a Virtual Early Learning information session or [take this virtual tour](#) of the school which includes a tour of the Centre. You are also welcome to [visit the IGS website](#), which includes stories and information on activities inside our Centre.

## Arrival and Departures

### **Q: Where do I enter the Early Learning Centre?**

A: Please enter (morning and afternoon) using the main entrance gate of the School on Kelly Street. The school gate is closed at 8.50am. If arriving after 8.50am please ring the School doorbell and IGS Reception staff will open the gate.

### **Q: How do I sign my child in and out of the Centre?**

A: After entering the main School gates, turn left to walk to the Early Learning sign in/out kiosks on the ground floor alongside Reception or upstairs outside the classrooms on Level 1. Parents and carers scan the QR code to sign your child in and out.

### **Q: Where do I go after signing my child in/out?**



A: Children attending Extended Hours arrive and depart on the ground floor of the Centre via the playground gate and a staff member will assist you. Please always ensure the gate is closed securely behind you. Children are never permitted to exit the gate without their authorised collector or teacher.

Term Time children (arrival from 8.35am and departure by 3pm) in Level 1 classrooms (Jungaa and Garrawan) arrive and depart from the doorway of their classroom on Level 1.  
Term Time children in ground floor classrooms (Bundaluk and Burraga) arrive at the playground, and depart from the large classroom space (Ngurang) on ground floor.

**Please note:** If travelling by car please find a safe park in a side street or Broadway shopping centre prior to walking to the Centre. During specified times, Kelly Street is a drive by area and parking is not permitted.

### Attendance options at IGS Early Learning Centre

#### **Q: When can my child attend IGS Early Learning Centre?**

We are licensed to enrol children from 3 to 6 years of age - an early education and care program for children prior to commencing Kindergarten in Primary School.

If your child is turning 3 in the months from February to May your child is welcome to commence in the year they turn 3 from the date of their birthday.

#### **Q: What are my child's hours of attendance?**

A: The Centre offers two attendance options - Term Time attendance and Extended Hours attendance. Term Time attendance runs from 8:35am - 3:00pm and Extended Hours attendance runs from 7:30am - 6:00pm.

#### **Q: What is Term Time Attendance?**

A: Families opting for their child to attend the term time option:

- Attend the IGS Early Education program on 2, 3 or 5 days according to the confirmed enrolment pattern of your child.
- Attend the Centre on your child's enrolled days from 8.35am to 3pm during IGS school terms. This attendance time matches the attendance time of IGS Primary School.
- Participate in the unique language and music programs, as part of our early education program.
- The daily fee applicable is \$138\*.

#### **Q: What is Extended Hours Attendance?**

A: Families opting for their child to attend the extended hours option:

- Attend the IGS Early Education program on 2, 3 or 5 days according to the confirmed enrolment pattern of your child.

- Attend the Centre on your child's enrolled days anytime from 7.30am to 6pm inclusive of term term breaks (previously referred to as Vacation Care).
- Are provided with a catered afternoon tea.
- Participate in the unique language and music programs, as part of our early education program.
- The daily fee applicable is \$173\*.

*\*Please note, there will be a CPI % increase according to the 2023 fee schedule as published each year in December.*

**Q: How many places are available in the Term Time and Extended Hours options in the Centre?**

**A:** The Centre is required by the Australian Government to ensure at least half of IGS Early Learning enrolments are reserved and offered as Extended Hours enrolments.

**Q: Are children enrolled in the Term Time option and Extended Hours option included in the same classroom?**

**A:** Yes, all children enrolled in Early Learning are taught together and access the same educational program and staff in one of our 4 class groups, designed to meet the national Early Years Learning Framework curriculum, as well as the IGS Language and Music programs.

**Q: Do children in the Term Time option and Extended Hours option access the same educational opportunities, teachers and curriculum?**

**A:** Yes. Children attending the Term Time and Extended Hours options together access the same early learning program underpinned by the Early Years Learning Framework, as well as IGS unique Language and Music programs. Children will continue to be taught by the same Teachers and Language Educators.

**Q: Is the Early Learning program provided during IGS term breaks? Can my child attend the Centre during term breaks?**

**A:** Yes, children enrolled in the Extended Hours option can attend the Centre year-round, inclusive of IGS term breaks. The Centre is open 48 weeks per year and the education and care program continues in the term breaks. Language and music group lessons don't occur during term break times though children continue to be immersed in informal language, culture and music experiences.

Children enrolled to attend the Term Time option are unable to attend the Centre during term breaks.

**Q: My child is enrolling in the Extended Hours option and will attend the Centre during term breaks. How is the program provided during term breaks?**

**A:** The Early Learning program is continuous. Children attending the Centre during term break will continue with investigations, project based learning and the play based curriculum informed by the Early Years Learning Framework and underpinned by our focus on languages and music.

During term break, children attend the Centre in the ground floor classrooms and engage with children from the 4 term time classrooms. Many of our Early Learning staff continue to work in the Centre during term breaks so that children have familiar educators with them. Some Centre staff access leave during the term break.

**Q: Do children attending Early Learning mix with children from Primary School enrolled to Primary School Vacation Care, or Primary School After Care?**

**A:** No. Children from Primary School attend a separate After Care and Vacation Care program on campus at IGS, specifically designed for older children. Primary school children attend their program in another part of the IGS campus.

**Q: How many days can my child attend the ELC?**

Under both attendance options, children can attend the Centre 2, 3 or 5 days each week. If attending 2 days, children attend Mondays and Tuesdays. If attending 3 days, children attend Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Children attend in set groups together with their peers. In this attendance pattern, children have the opportunity to get to know one another as a class group, with the same children attending on the same days as your child - this supports children to develop friendships, relationships and connections in the Centre.

**Q: Can my child attend casual days at the Centre?**

**A:** No, we do not offer casual days at the Centre. Children can only attend on their scheduled day of attendance, according to their enrolled program.

**Q: Can I increase or change my child's days of attendance at the Centre once they have commenced in the program?**

**A:** Parents are welcome to request a change or increase in their child's attendance days in the Centre to match one of the attendance options (2 days, 3 days or 5 day enrolment). Places will be allocated as they are available.

**Q: What times can I drop off and collect my child?**

**A:** If your child is enrolled in the Extended Hours option, they can be dropped off from 7:30am. If your child is enrolled in the Term Time option, they can be dropped off from 8:35am. We encourage you to drop off your children no earlier than the start time of their enrolled attendance option. It's advisable for your child to arrive no later than 9.15am in order to fully participate in the wide range of experiences offered each day.

**Q: Does the Centre close throughout the year?**

**A:** We are open year round with the exception of a 2 to 3 week closure late December to mid January each year. The Centre is closed on NSW gazetted public holidays, and on the first day of each IGS school term to enable staff professional development. Staff professional development days are noted in advance on the IGS website.

## Absences

**Q: My child will be enrolling in the Extended Hours option. What happens if my child doesn't attend the Centre on particular days due to illness or absence during term breaks?**

**A:** Children enrolled in the Extended Hours option who are absent for any reason during IGS terms or term break time will be marked absent. Fees are payable for these absences.

Please note that under the CCS rules, children are entitled to 42 initial absence days per financial year. For the 2022-23 financial year, families can get 10 extra allowable absences bringing the total number of absence days to 52.

**Q: My child will be enrolling in the Term Time option from 8.35am to 3pm during term times. What happens if my child doesn't attend the Centre on particular days due to illness or absence during the term?**

**A:** Children enrolled in the Term Time Program who are absent for any reason during the term will be marked absent. Fees are payable for these absences.

## Class Groups in Early Learning

**Q: How are children grouped in the Centre?**

**A:** Children are grouped in classes according to the language of enrolment. Currently, children enrolled to learn Chinese or Italian are grouped together, and children enrolled to learn German, French or Japanese are grouped together.

Children attend the Centre in mixed age groups. Each year there are new children of 3 to 3.5 years of age in the class group together with returning children who are 4 to 4.5 years of age. There are also many new starting children who will commence in the program at 4 years of age. The age range in our Early Learning classrooms will replicate the age range in IGS Kindergarten, whereby some children commence school at age 6, and other children closer to 4.5 years.

**Q: Which class group will my child attend and where is their classroom located?**

There are two class groups of children enrolled to learn Chinese or Italian. Children enrolled to learn one of these languages attend in a class group on the ground floor of the Centre.

**Bundaluk (Crimson Rosella)** classroom (ground floor) contains a combination of children learning either Chinese or Italian. Chinese and Italian language educators teach in this class group.

**Burruga (Koala)** classroom (ground floor) contains a combination of children learning either Chinese or Italian. Chinese and Italian language educators teach in this class group.

There are two class groups of children enrolled to learn German, French or Japanese. Children enrolled to learn one of these three languages attend a class group on Level 1 of the Centre.

**Jungaa (Octopus)** classroom (Level 1) contains a combination of children learning either German, French or Japanese. German, French and Japanese language educators teach in this class group.

**Garrawan (Currarong)** classroom (Level 1) contains a combination of children learning either German, French or Japanese. German, French and Japanese language educators teach in this class group.

**Q: How do children of varying ages learn together?**

A: Research of early education programs has found that when children are grouped by age there is a wide range of skill level, maturity level and experiences that impact on how children play, learn, develop and get along with others.

In mixed age groups older children develop vital leadership skills by engaging with younger children or same age peers new to the group. Older children become increasingly independent.

Younger children are exposed to more advanced language levels and complexity, which develops their communication skills. In turn, older children learn how to change their language, behaviour and expectations to meet the age of the children they're playing with, and often become skilled at 'reading' and responding to younger children.

Our educators and teachers ensure all children are safe and able to participate in a range of experiences and activities to support each child's interests, abilities and goals.

Through strong knowledge and assessment of each child's abilities, our developmental play spaces, curriculum, routines and experiences cater for all children in the group.

Each child is challenged at their level, with support, encouragement and guidance from their teachers through carefully planned activities that are inclusive and build confidence.

**Q: How many 3 year old children will be enrolled in each class group?**

A: We excitedly welcome a number of 3 year old children and their families each year to start their educational journey with IGS. We are also experiencing a strong demand for enrolment of children in their year before school. In addition to 3 year old children, there are many 4 year old children who join the Early Learning program for the first time in their year prior to Kindergarten.

Most class groups will have a slightly higher proportion of children in their year before school enrolled, and a smaller proportion of 3 to 4 year old children.

**Staff at Early Learning**

**Q: What is the ratio of staff to children?**

At IGS Early Learning Centre, children and staff enjoy high staff to child ratios with well experienced, passionate and long serving teachers and educators.

Each of our four Early Learning class groups of up to 30 children is supported by four staff who implement the early learning teaching programs.

Each class group in the Early Learning program is led by a university qualified Early Childhood Teacher, working in collaboration with three educators qualified in early education and care certificate and diploma courses. Many of our educators are native speakers of the languages taught within Early Learning, which are French, German, Italian, Japanese and Chinese (Mandarin).

In addition, our Centre employs a full time specialist Early Childhood Music Teacher who implements the music program in all class groups, every day. We employ an Extended Hours Teacher who specifically designs an engaging program for children attending the Centre each afternoon, and during term break.

In addition, our Head of School Early Learning and Deputy Head of School Early Learning are highly experienced Early Childhood Teachers supporting the overall implementation of the Early Learning Centre programs.

**Q: Who will my child's teacher and educators be?**

Each family will receive information prior to commencement of their child's teacher and educators.

**Q: How many language educators teach each of the 5 languages in IGS Early Learning Centre?**

A: The Centre currently employs two language educators for each of the five languages taught in the Early Learning program. The language educators will work side by side in adjoining classrooms in the Centre.

**Q: What other staff support the unique educational programs at IGS Early Learning?**

A: In addition to classroom Teachers, Language Educators and Educators, the Centre is fortunate to employ an Early Childhood Specialist Music Teacher.

Further, the Centre operation is supported and coordinated by the Head and Deputy Heads of School Early Learning, an Educational Leader, a Centre Administrator, the Head of Junior School Languages and the Director of Music.

**Learning and development at IGS Early Learning**

**Q: How will I know that my child's learning and development will be encouraged?**

At IGS, the Early Learning curriculum means all the interactions, experiences, routines and events that occur each day – all designed to foster every child's learning and development.

Our Teachers and Educators provide children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success and learning.

Children are encouraged to focus on the process of learning. We support children to experiment, solve problems, and follow through their ideas to completion. We aim for children to have opportunities to contribute to decision making, building a sense of competence and self-esteem.

Our program is balanced with opportunities for children to make choices about the activities they become involved in, and activities that are led and structured by the teachers and educators through small group work, including language and music group activities.

**Q: How is learning and development promoted in the IGS Early Learning?**

“Play is the work of young children.”

Research shows us that young children learn best through play - hands on, experiential and active teaching and learning experiences.

The Early Learning program provides children with a variety of creative, open-ended and vibrant learning experiences including construction, arts and crafts, reading, writing, drawing, puzzles, sensory experiences and dramatic play.

The daily routine includes blocks of time for children to move freely and make choices and decisions about what and how they would like to play. Within these experiences, children are supported by their teachers to learn social skills, fine motor skills, maths, literacy and creativity.

Educators work alongside children to observe what they are learning, provide assistance, extend and challenge children’s development. Children are supported to build on their individual interests, skills and strengths and this often involves deep and meaningful project work on a range of topics.

The activities and play experiences provided support the Early Years Learning Framework outcomes, promoting children’s developing sense of identity, their connection and contribution to their world, their sense of well-being and their development as confident and involved learners and effective communicators.

**Q: How will my child’s individual learning needs be catered for?**

A: All children have an individualised learning program developed in Term 1. Individualised goals will be established for each child in collaboration with their family.

Goals for individual children will be developed with consideration of:

- What is most important to you
- Your child’s interests
- Understanding what your child has recently learnt, and identification of the next step to progress further



- Areas of development your child may need support with

**Q: How will I know how my child is progressing in the program?**

Teachers and educators regularly post specific information about teaching and learning experiences for individual children, as well as the group, on Storypark.

Teachers are available to meet with parents by Zoom or phone to discuss your child's progress and development.

In addition, parent-teacher conferences are held each semester to support information sharing and collaborative planning to support each child's ongoing learning and development.

Teachers and educators regularly assess each child's development and progress during the year, and summarise this information in a report to share with families at the end of the year.

**Learning a second language at IGS: our unique offering**

**Q: How many languages are taught in the Centre?**

A: IGS Early Learning offers a choice of five languages - Chinese, Italian, German, French or Japanese.

**Q: How do children learn a second language at IGS Early Learning?**

Right from the first day, your child will be immersed in the joy of learning another language - this is our school's unique offering! The immersive approach means that the children's learning mirrors the way native language is acquired - by being surrounded at every opportunity by the language. From a very early age, they are exposed to rich language input from their language educators through activities and routines.

Our language educators form part of our classroom staff - children engage with their native speaking language educator throughout the day in Early Learning.

In addition to our immersive language learning approach, language educators facilitate small group experiences and activities each day, targeting language learning through activities including rhyme, music, movement, poetry, exploration and games.

Children transitioning to IGS primary school continue to learn the language chosen on enrolment in Early Learning.

**Music in Early Learning: our "other" language**

**Q: How is music taught in the Early Learning program?**

The learning of music as a language is intrinsically linked to the Early Learning Framework and is interconnected to the importance of language and culture at IGS. As a sensory learning experience, children come to understand this symbolic language through singing, playing,

listening and moving, with a curriculum designed around Orff-Schulwerk, Dalcroze and Kodály Music Education methodologies which is connected to the musical offerings in the K-6 Music Program.

Music lessons are child-centred, using play-based teaching techniques and founded in experiential learning in developing musical knowledge and understanding. For each child, this inquiry mode within the classroom, has been designed to promote curiosity, extend interests and build a love of learning.

Our role as Music Educators, through a variety of musical experiences, is to provide children with opportunities that foster creation, expression and exploration in extending their innate musical ability. Learning experiences include singing, dancing, chanting rhymes and making rhythms using their hands and a variety of instruments. In furthering the musical development of the child, these opportunities help foster an awareness and understanding of music, guiding children to value and find meaning in their own lives and those of others.

The inquiry-based Music Curriculum is developed with a blend of intentional teaching and child-led investigation through varying musical experiences. Within the context of Early Learning at IGS, the Music Program offers a purposeful education that establishes in each child a love of learning and a strong sense of self.

### Getting ready for Kindergarten

**Q: My child is in their year prior to school, how will my child's development be supported as they prepare to transition to Kindergarten?**

A: IGS Early Learning Centre is proud to employ highly qualified and experienced teachers and educators. Each of our class groups is led by a university qualified teacher with a Bachelor degree specialised in early childhood education, who works in collaboration with our educators.

Teachers and educators adapt the curriculum and their teaching strategies to support children's development and maximise the educational benefits for individual children, and the group as a whole. All activities, routines and experiences in Early Learning are designed to support children to reach their potential and take the next step in their development and learning journey, including the transition to school.

As an Early Learning program in a school community, we involve children in their year prior to school in a variety of experiences to support their transition to and preparation for commencing school. The Centre has a close relationship with the IGS Head of Kindergarten to Year 2. Children transitioning to IGS Kindergarten have the opportunity to join the bespoke IGS Beginning to Belonging Kindergarten Transition Program.

**Q: What programs does IGS Early Learning have in place to support my child's preparation for school?**

A: The Centre's curriculum is guided by Australia's national Early Years Learning Framework for early education and care programs. The framework, its principles, practices and learning outcomes are the foundation of our program and provide a structure to provide children a springboard for future success and learning.

In addition to the learning outcomes from the Early Years Learning Framework, IGS Early Learning implements a unique language and music program. The language and music curriculum in Early Learning is based upon the NESA Early Stage 1 learning outcomes that are continued into Kindergarten.

Further, children in their year prior to school will continue to be involved in a broad range of curriculum areas to support their ongoing preparation for school including:

- You Can Do It! Program, an evidence based program developed by psychologists in collaboration with teachers to promote children's learning of social and emotional skills including resilience.
- Regular library sessions in the Bibliotheque.
- Participation in Kindergarten classroom and language transition activities and visits in the latter part of the year.

### **Regular communication with parents and carers at IGS Early Learning**

#### **Q: How will information be shared with me regarding my child, their progress, development and messages relating to the Centre and School?**

A: Relationships are an important facet of life at IGS. We encourage our families to be actively involved in meetings, seminars, celebrations and events.

We recognise the importance of regular communication between families and Centre staff. We value sharing information on a daily basis to support the care and education of each child. Families are encouraged and welcome to share information and discuss any questions, feedback or concerns about your child's development or participation in the program. Appointments for parent teacher meetings can also be made for longer discussions.

We use Storypark as an online documentation tool that allows us to privately share with you photos, videos and learning stories of your child in action, growing and developing. It also allows us to keep you up to date with events and activities. As parents, you can view this information individually or with your child.

Families from IGS Early Learning are included in school wide communications. A weekly eNewsletter, InFocus, is emailed to all IGS parents and carers on Fridays and includes whole school news. IGS Early Learning's own newsletter, Chatterbox, is emailed to families every Friday and contains Centre-specific news and updates.

The IGS Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTF) warmly welcomes new parents and caregivers, hosts school community meetings and supports the IGS Community Learning Program, social events and more.

### **What to pack for IGS Early Learning**

#### **Q: What does my child need to bring to the Centre?**

A: At IGS Early Learning we encourage and promote children's independence and provide support to children whenever it is required.

Children bring their morning tea and lunch packed from home. Our teachers and educators help children to learn to recognise their own belongings, and pack away when they are finished - great skills to learn in preparation for going to school.

In addition, children bring a water bottle, bedding (for children requiring a sleep or rest), and a change of clothing. IGS supplies each of our Early Learners with an IGS bucket hat in a colour to match their new friends in their class group (red, green, blue and gold). IGS hats are broad brimmed and meet NSW Cancer Council's sun safe specifications. Hats are kept at IGS and laundered by the Centre.

Children attending in Extended Hours are provided with a healthy, nutritious and varied afternoon tea snack.

IGS includes children with various health and dietary needs - children with allergies and anaphylaxis attend the Centre so we request foods containing nuts, whole egg foods and messy dairy foods are not brought into the Centre.

#### **Can I order morning tea and or lunch for my child from the IGS Canteen?**

Families in Early Learning may order morning tea and lunch from the IGS Canteen. The IGS Canteen, run by Anthony's Catering, operates everyday from 9am to 2pm during term time. Please note the canteen is not available during IGS term break periods.

#### **How do I place an order?**

Orders may be placed via the FlexiSchools app or website. Canteen orders must be placed before 8.30am. For information about how to set up a profile with FlexiSchools please refer to the instructions linked [here](#).

### **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

#### **Q: My child has a specific health or medical need - how will these needs be supported at Early Learning?**

A: The Early Learning Centre welcomes and includes children of diverse backgrounds, abilities and individual needs. This includes children with specific health management plans. If your child has an allergy, anaphylaxis, asthma, eczema, diabetes or any other health condition diagnosed

by a medical practitioner requiring management please inform our Centre as early as possible so that together we can plan for your child's safe and healthy inclusion in the program.

**Q: Does my child need to be toilet trained in order to attend the IGS ELC?**

A: Each of our classrooms in the Early Learning Centre have children's toilets and hand basins.

Children are supervised and provided support during personal care routines.

We understand that young children are often still learning the process of toilet training around the time of commencement in the program at age 3 years. Unfortunately we do not have nappy change facilities, however, if your child is not fully toilet trained please speak with us as early as possible to talk together about how we can best support your child.

**Q: Does my child have to nap at the Centre?**

A: No. The daily routine in the Centre program includes opportunities for each child to rest, relax or sleep according to their individual needs and family requests.

Each day after lunch the children are encouraged to rest their bodies to rejuvenate for the rest of the afternoon's activities and play. Children requiring a sleep are provided a comfortable mattress with bedding provided from home; lights are dimmed and quiet music is played to create a cosy, calm, atmosphere.

Some children prefer to relax or have a rest. These children engage in storytelling, yoga and other restful experiences for a short period of time before resuming active play in the program.

**Q: What if my child is unwell?**

A: Anyone who has even the mildest of symptoms including fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, loss of smell/taste, muscle/joint pains, diarrhoea, nausea/vomiting or extreme tiredness should remain home. We advise persons with symptoms to complete a COVID test and let us know the results. Children can return to the Centre when they are feeling well and free of symptoms.

**Q: What if a child becomes unwell at the Centre?**

A: Where a child becomes unwell at the Centre staff will contact the child's family to collect them as soon as possible. Where possible (where supervision and ratio requirements allow) we will keep the child in isolation until they are collected.

**COVID safety at IGS Early Learning Centre**

**Q: What are the vaccination requirements for staff at IGS?**

A: All IGS staff must have received at least two doses of a TGA approved COVID-19 vaccine to undertake work at the School and Centre.

**Q: How is the Centre promoting health and wellbeing?**

A: Our educators support children's understanding of viruses and discuss health and hygiene practices, such as physical distancing, handwashing and sneeze etiquette, to help keep us safe.

**Q: How is environmental cleaning taking place at IGS Early Learning?**

A: IGS employs a team of professional cleaners who conduct a deep clean every evening in addition to regular cleaning of all high touch surfaces frequently during our operational hours. Frequent environmental cleaning aims to minimise the number of germs that survive on surfaces in the Centre.

In addition to the high levels of professional cleaning, Early Learning staff wipe, wash and soak play equipment regularly.

## Settling in

**Q: At the commencement of the year, how will the group settle in?**

A: We anticipate returning children will resettle, together with familiar peers, in a short period of time. With 3 year old children, and some new 4 year old children joining each class group at the commencement of Term 1, we anticipate a smooth start to the year, with older children modelling routines, behaviour and leadership within the groups.

**Q: What if my child feels upset on arrival? How will my child settle into the program?**

A: For some children, commencing at IGS Early Learning may be the first experience of being cared for by new people other than family and close friends.

The weeks leading up to your child starting in the Centre may be hard, but there are some things you can do to get them ready for this exciting chapter.

- **Build a good relationship** with the educators and teachers at the Centre – this will help us understand your priorities.
- **Ease your child in with visits** and shorter days then slowly adding extra days or hours.
- **Talk with us** to identify ways to help your child settle in, such as providing family photographs to include in the program.
- **Let us know what comforts your child**, e.g. a special toy or blanket, to help them settle down when they're upset.

Our strong focus and priority as children commence in Early Learning is that they feel safe, comfortable and a sense of belonging. We promote close relationships between children and their educators, and also connect children to one another, helping them to make new friends.

We ask all parents and carers to say goodbye to their child before leaving, and to contact the Centre anytime for an update regarding how your child has settled in for the day.

**Q: Will there be an orientation session?**

A: Yes. Information about orientation sessions will be shared with you following enrolment. We offer a series of Play and Explore orientation sessions in Term 4 for children enrolling in the new

year, as well as a Meet the Teacher orientation session just prior to the commencement of Term 1. If your child is enrolling outside of these times, we will arrange an orientation session individually with your family.

## Application and enrolment

### **Q: Is there a waiting list for entry to the IGS Early Learning program?**

Yes there is a waiting list for enrolment into our program. We begin our admissions process in May each year and continue throughout the year, or until all places are full. Our waitlists are ordered by the date of application so the earlier your application date, the sooner you will hear from the Admission team about entry. Most of our places are filled in the year before entry but there may be availability, so you are welcome to call IGS on 9219 6700 and ask to be put through to Admissions if you'd like further information about this.

### **Q: If my child attends the IGS Early Learning Centre, are we automatically enrolled to IGS Kindergarten for primary school?**

All children enrolled in Early Learning are automatically offered a place in Kindergarten. Children moving on from Early Learning to Kindergarten will continue with the same language they started with in the Centre.

### **Q: How can I apply for enrolment?**

We encourage families to apply early for enrolment. Please [view details here](#).

## IGS Early Learning Fees

### **Q: What are the fees and can our family access the Child Care Subsidy relating to attendance at IGS Early Learning?**

A: Detailed information regarding Early Learning Centre fees can be found on the Early Learning Hub of the IGS Parent Lounge [here](#). The ELC Fee Policy can be found [here](#).

The IGS Early Learning Centre is an approved child care service provider and eligible families can access Child Care Subsidy (CCS). Eligibility depends on your individual circumstances. If you're new to childcare, we recommend that you visit Services Australia website or contact Centrelink directly to understand your eligibility.

CCS covers a percentage of your child's daily fees. This percentage is paid directly to IGS Early Learning Centre and then passed on to families as a credit on their fee account. Families pay the gap fee between the daily fees and the subsidised amount.

### **Q: What is the new Fee Assistance being introduced in 2023?**

A: The NSW Government is providing fee relief to families through the Start Strong Affordable Preschool initiative as part of the Early Years Commitment. Information about the new fee relief is linked [here](#).



Families with children who are at least four years old on or before 31 July 2023, and who are enrolled in a preschool program in a long day care setting may save up to \$2,110 in 2023.

The funding for your child's fee relief will be provided to our Centre, directly from the NSW Government, and we will pass this fee relief on to you as a reduction to your fees.

You cannot receive fee relief at more than one early childhood education service.

There will be no impact on your Child Care Subsidy.

The fee relief will be allocated to you as a flat rate across the number of weeks our Centre is open during the calendar year.

If your child will be attending another service that offers fee relief (a community preschool or another long day care service), you will need to choose which service you would like to receive fee relief from.

**Q: How are Early Learning fees billed?**

**A:** Fees for children enrolled in Early Learning are billed as a daily fee charge. Fees are deducted from a nominated account fortnightly in advance.

Families eligible for Child Care Subsidy will have immediate financial assistance to help cover the cost of the service. Child Care Subsidy is applied immediately to relevant children's accounts, and families eligible for CCS will only have the gap fee deducted from their nominated account.

**Q: I have a child attending IGS Primary and or IGS High School. How are fees billed in other parts of the school?**

**A:** Families with children attending Primary and High School pay fees in advance separate to the billing procedure for Early Learning.

**Q: What is the fee structure at IGS Early Learning?**

**A:** For children enrolled to IGS Early Learning Centre a daily fee charge applies:

**Daily fee charge per day for the Term Time Program is \$138\*.**

**Daily fee charge per day for the Extended Hours Program is \$173\*.**

*\*Please note, there will be a CPI % increase according to the 2023 fee schedule as published each year in December.*

**Q: How frequently will I be required to pay Early Learning fees?**





**A:** Fees are deducted from a nominated account fortnightly in advance by direct debit. Families are required to complete a direct debit online form nominating their account. Fees are processed via the Centre's provider endpoint software, Xplor.

**Q: How will I know the balance of my child's Early Learning fee account?**

**A:** Families receive fortnightly Statements from Xplor. Statements clearly show the daily fee charge for the sessions enrolled, the Child Care Subsidy amount your family may be eligible to receive, and the gap fee deducted from your nominated account. In addition, families can access account updates anytime via login to their Xplor App.

**Q: Where can I find my child's IGS Early Learning account balance?**

**A:** Parents and carers of enrolled children have access to "Xplor Home" where you can access statements, invoices, sign in and out (using a QR code) and update payment details.

**Q: How will I see the Child Care Subsidy credits applied to my child's account?**

**A:** Families eligible for Child Care Subsidy can see the subsidy amount applied to your child's account on the fortnightly statement of fees.

**Q: What notice period is required if my child's enrolment is withdrawn from IGS Early Learning at some stage in the future?**

**A:** Families are required to give one term's notice of intent to withdraw, in writing (or equivalent to 10 weeks of term time). When appropriate notice is given, families can be reimbursed the \$1200 fee deposit.

**Q: Is there a fee charge for early withdrawal from the Early Learning program?**

**A:** There is no fee charge for withdrawal from the program when one full term's notice of withdrawal is given.

**Q: Is there a sibling discount applicable for children with a sibling enrolled in Early Learning or IGS schools?**

**A:** No. Sibling discounts are applicable to siblings attending IGS Primary and High Schools. Children attending Early Learning, including families with two children enrolled in Early Learning, are not eligible for fee discounts.

**Q: What is the enrolment fee?**

**A:** The enrolment fee is \$750 (non refundable) per child and payable upon confirmation of entry to the School at all levels, including the Early Learning Centre.

**Q: What is the fee deposit?**

**A:** The fee deposit is \$1200 and paid upon confirmation of entry into the School at all levels. This deposit may be credited against the family's fee account when the child leaves the Centre or School, at the request of the parent or guardian.

**Q: For children not yet enrolled, what amount of fees in advance will be required upon confirmation of entry into the Centre?**

**A:** Early Learning families are required to pay \$750 Enrolment Fee, the IGS Fee Deposit (\$1200) and two weeks fees in advance upon confirmation of entry to the Centre. These fees are non refundable in the case a child does not commence in the program.