

# FAMILY HANDBOOK

**deiou**  
FOUNDATION  
for children with autism



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# WELCOME FROM OUR CEO

Welcome to AEIOU Foundation for Children with Autism. Our goal is to give young children with autism the best opportunities to thrive at home, school and in the wider community. We operate 11 specialist education & care centres across Queensland, South Australia and in the Australian Capital Territory.

We understand parenting a child with complex needs presents unique challenges. Our team is here to support you as you navigate the early years of your child's autism diagnosis. You can expect quality therapy, education and care for your child, alongside training and support for you as your child's primary carer.

AEIOU is Australia's largest employer of autism-specific therapists, educators and early intervention specialists, working together to support each child.

The teaching strategies we use are evidence-based, which means they are proven to be safe and they are proven to help children grow.

Upon enrolment, each child's baseline skills are assessed and individual goals are created in collaboration with your family. Each child is assessed throughout their time at AEIOU to monitor their supports and their development.

This Family Handbook includes everything you need to know about how AEIOU manages its service, and how we partner with you to achieve positive outcomes for your child.

You can contact the team at your local centre with any questions. You're also welcome to reach out to our friendly team at AEIOU's Central Office on 1300 273 435. Thank you for choosing AEIOU Foundation as your partner in autism-specific therapy, education and care.

Yours sincerely  
Alan Smith  
CEO



## ABOUT US

AEIOU Foundation was established in 2005 by James and Louise Morton, after their son was diagnosed with autism. Their experience with autism began shortly after Andrew's first birthday. It was at this time his behaviour changed; he would cry continuously and at times, his behaviour escalated to severe head banging. He didn't attempt baby talk and was silent except for the word 'mum'.

Andrew was diagnosed at the age of two, with what was then known as 'autistic disorder', and Louise and James sought the best possible educational program to support his needs. They discovered an early intervention pilot program run by Education Queensland.

Andrew began to make great progress in a short space of time, however in 2003, the pilot program was closed. Unhappy with the therapy options left for Andrew, James and Louise, together with Andrew's therapist Rebecca Allen, developed the concept for AEIOU in November 2003.

In February 2005, the first AEIOU centre opened in Moorooka, Queensland. The centre was dedicated to an intensive early intervention learning program for children with an autism diagnosis.

### Our vision

Children with autism living their best lives.

### Our purpose and mission statement

To enhance the lives of children with autism and their families, through evidence-based, successful early intervention therapy and practical support.

### Our philosophy

We believe children:

- Have a right to early intervention
- Benefit from therapy based on individual needs
- Learn using different learning styles and at different rates
- Are individuals, with differing personalities, needs, wants, interests and levels of ability
- Require flexible routines in their daily program to cater for their individual needs
- Should receive evidence-based early intervention and access to appropriate assessment
- Are entitled to a balanced program that bridges the gap between the home, AEIOU Foundation and the community
- Can benefit from families and staff working together



# INTEGRATED EARLY INTERVENTION, EDUCATION AND CARE

AEIOU Foundation delivers evidence-based early intervention therapy, autism-specific early childhood education, and specialist care.

Each child is unique, so our quality teaching strategies are highly individualised. Everything the team around your child does is focused on supporting their needs and building on their strengths and skills.

The AEIOU curriculum focuses on:

- Functional communication and behaviour
- Play and social skills
- Self-help skills
- Classroom attending skills
- Independent living skills (such as mealtime, toileting and transition supports)

Throughout the day, children work in small groups of 3-4, in pairs or 1:1 with a therapist or early intervention team member.

Our therapy is embedded within developmentally appropriate play to support children to learn and model behaviours in a specialist childcare setting.

## Our supports

### Evidence-based, individualised support

The early intervention strategies we use are informed by established and well-researched early intervention models, including the Early Start Denver Model, VB-MAPP, and the sciences of behaviour analysis and naturalistic development.

AEIOU delivers supports in line with the Australian Guidelines for Good Practice by providing a range of therapeutic interventions.

A child's clinical assessments (which help us understand their strengths, preferences and needs), the supports clinically recommended for them, and your family's goals all inform your child's individual learning plan.

A Schedule of Supports, provided every 6 months, describes the therapy structures that will support how each child's Individual Plan is delivered.

These support strategies set the foundation for future learning, increasing opportunities for inclusion and to live more independently.

For more information on good practice visit [dss.gov.au](http://dss.gov.au) and search Early Intervention for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders: 'Guidelines for Good Practice'.

### Our transdisciplinary team

Each child has access to multiple therapeutic supports in the one centre environment including speech therapy, occupational therapy and behaviour support.

Our team members have the skills not just to work in their own area of expertise but also to support across other areas of a child's development. Children benefit from a consistent approach to therapy and care, and build foundational skills across domains.

## Autism: the early years

We understand how important it is for parents and carers to be well supported in the early years of an autism diagnosis.



AEIOU has designed the *Autism: The Early Years* video series with useful information and practical advice for families we support. With over nine episodes, we cover topics like behaviour and communication with AEIOU's very own autism experts, along with family members of children who have accessed our service.

The series is free to view at [aeiou.org.au/autism-the-early-years](http://aeiou.org.au/autism-the-early-years)



## Reinforcement

We use the evidence-based practice of reinforcement to support children's motivation and skill development. This means that after a functional behaviour occurs, our clinicians not only praise the child, but they also add something extra. When reinforcement is used in a therapeutic context, it increases the likelihood that behaviour will happen again.

The best reinforcement is aligned with your child's interests. Our team are keen to learn about things your child likes, to support their learning. This is done through preference assessments.

Some children have limited tangible interests, and we may look into whether they enjoy edible items as part of their learning. If this is the case, our team will discuss this strategy with you and ask for your consent in the Edibles Consent Form.

## Mealtime support

At AEIOU, we view mealtimes as an opportunity to develop self-help skills, talk about health, nutrition and hygiene, practice making requests, and promote social interaction.

Our team sit at tables with children at mealtimes to help develop skills. Team members will also be supporting children with tailored mealtime interventions (if arranged) during this time.

## Community or at-home support

As part of our family-centred approach, AEIOU can offer support to your family outside of the centre-based environment. These supports are individually tailored to each child and are additional to centre fees.

If you would like to explore community or at-home supports, please discuss with your child's therapy team.

## The Early Years Learning Framework

AEIOU's early learning program is aligned to the Australian Government's Early Years Learning Framework.

The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time of belonging, being and becoming.

- **Belonging** is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they belong because of the relationship they have with their family, community, culture and place.
- **Being** is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be' – time to play, try new things and have fun.
- **Becoming** is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the adult they will become.

## Transition support

At AEIOU, supporting children with autism is not just about early intervention; it is also about ensuring a smooth transition from your centre to your child's next educational setting.

We have found the best way to assist with your child's transition is being able to collaborate with you when the process will occur and for you to coordinate between settings. Where appropriate, we can:

- Provide a transition support plan to support the process
- Attend meetings/interviews/orientation with you
- Host visits for each child to support the transition process

Additional transition supports (such as supporting staff and children at the new setting, providing education and resources, etc.) can be written into your NDIS Plan.

Please contact our Family Support team for more information [familysupport@aeiou.org.au](mailto:familysupport@aeiou.org.au)



## Celebrating cultural diversity

Australia is a culturally and linguistically diverse nation and, at AEIOU, we're proud to welcome families and team members from all cultural backgrounds. In fact, across our services, families come from more than 45 different countries!

We build on children's understanding and awareness of culture and cultural diversity every day as part of our program.

Interpreter services are available at any time during your child's enrolment.

# ADDITIONAL SERVICES

## Supported Learning Space

The supported learning space (SLS)\* is a specialist childcare program designed for autistic children, offering a safe, supportive environment with an engaging, accessible curriculum and experienced educators. The program is open to all neurodiverse learners and does not rely on NDIS funding for participation.

Why choose the supported learning space:

- We can enhance overall development through an individualised early childhood program
- Increase the social and emotional skills of children
- A stepping stone between accessing integrated therapy support and mainstream education
- Experienced staff who are trained in evidenced-based intervention techniques
- High staff-to-child ratio
- Small classroom sizes of 12 children

## Enrolment criteria

To be able to deliver a quality service for our children and families and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children and staff, enrolment criteria will need to be met for access to SLS.

These criteria include:

- Ability for child to participate in a group learning environment
- Minimal/low-risk behaviours of concern
- Minimum 2-day per week enrolment

*\*Please note: This program is a new addition that compliments AEIOU autism-specific early intervention program. It does not include therapeutic support though families may be eligible to access therapy supports.*

## Therapy Supports

In 2024, we expanded our services to include private therapy for AEIOU alumni transitioning to new schools or educational settings. Now, we are excited to open our waitlist to the wider community, providing a unique opportunity for families seeking specialised supports.

Our therapy services are tailored for children with an autism diagnosis, suspected autism, or Global Developmental Delay (GDD), and include options for speech pathology, occupational therapy, and behaviour support.

Delivered by allied health practitioners with paediatric and autism-specific experience, these therapies focus on supporting your child's development in a way that recognises their individual strengths and unique needs.

You can arrange with the team for Therapy Services to take place either at home, school or centre environments (depending on availability).



# A typical day for the full-time service at AEIOU

AEIOU offers full-time (Mon-Fri) and part-time enrolments as well as our supported learning space (SLS does not include therapeutic support). Therapies are delivered in a range of settings throughout the day, in small groups and through play-based activities with a high staff-to-child ratio.

Qualified clinicians and early intervention specialists support your child, engaging them in areas of their own interest and helping them build and generalise skills.

Your child's weekly timetable is based on their agreed Schedule of Supports and generally repeats across a 12-week Block. Throughout each Block, you'll have opportunities to attend parent engagement sessions, therapy & care team meetings, and your child will engage in clinical assessments and any tailored supports.

**Below is an example of AEIOU's core, full-time service – the part-time model and SLS will differ.**

## The team around the child



### Centre Manager (CM)

Manages the centre's classroom management and clinical teams, and centre practices



### Room Leader (RL) / Early Childhood Teacher (ECT)

Manages and leads the classroom, overseeing therapy program delivery, education and care and supervises Early Intervention Specialists



### Early Intervention Specialist (EIS)

Delivers therapy and teaching in the classroom



### Behaviour Analyst (BA) / Behaviour Consultant (BC)

Engages in 1:1 sessions with children, and supports them to maximise cognitive and social capabilities and to reduce behaviours of concern. Provides team training and supervision in area of expertise



### Occupational Therapist (OT)

Engages in 1:1 sessions with children, and supports them to develop play, social, motor and self-help skills. Provides team training and supervision in area of expertise



### Speech Pathologist (SP)

Engages in 1:1 sessions with children, and supports them to develop expressive and receptive language skills, social skills and speech skills. Provides team training and supervision in area of expertise



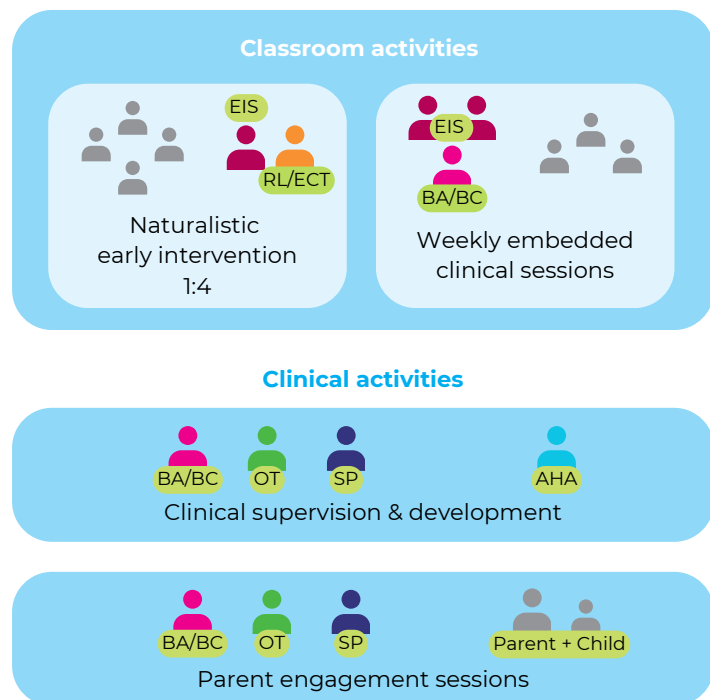
### Allied Health Assistant (AHA)

Assists in 1:1 sessions with child and assists in delivering classroom therapy programs (where available)

## AEIOU's Service Model: Activities in the centre

Our core service includes:

- Co-constructed learning / specialised childcare time in ratios of 1:4
- Naturalistic teaching in ratios of 1:4
- Weekly occupational therapy, speech therapy, and behaviour support embedded into naturalistic early intervention time
- Parent engagement sessions delivered as specified in the child's Schedule of Support by case manager or appropriate therapist from the child's clinical leadership team





# NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (NDIS)



AEIOU is an approved NDIS service provider, and our teams are certified to provide therapeutic supports funded by the Scheme.

We must comply with the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework and meet the NDIS Practice Standards, Rules and Guidelines as outlined in the NDIS Act 2013 and related requirements including the rights of people with disabilities and the rights of the child.

The Core NDIS Practice Standards we must meet cover:

- Rights and Responsibilities
- Governance and Operational Management
- Provision of Support
- Support Provision Environment

We are registered to provide the following service groups and must meet the Standards specified for each:

- Early Intervention and Therapy
- Behaviour

AEIOU is subject to an external audit compliance and monitoring process that assesses our organisation's performance and compliance with the Quality and Safeguarding Framework.

Further information about these Standards can be found on the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission website: [ndiscommission.gov.au](http://ndiscommission.gov.au).

In addition to the Standards, we have organisational systems and processes in place to safeguard against risks related to:

- Behaviour support and the positive behaviour support capability framework
- Incident management and reportable incidents of harm or serious injury
- NDIS code of conduct and new worker orientation
- Worker screening with appropriate criminal history checks maintained
- Complaints management and resolution

## Navigating the NDIS

Navigating a complex system like the NDIS can feel confusing. We're here to help.

AEIOU's dedicated Family Support team can help you with:

- Pre-planning for your NDIS meeting
- What to do if you are not happy with your Plan
- How to action a review
- What support to expect from AEIOU through a review process
- What happens if your child's goals change
- Who to notify if those goals are changing

You can reach our specialist team [familysupport@aeiou.org.au](mailto:familysupport@aeiou.org.au).

So we can ensure your child is able to consistently access our service, we ask families to keep us up-to-date on their child's NDIS plan budget and funding arrangements.



# AT THE CENTRE



## What to pack

- Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea
- A water bottle filled with water
- Multiple changes of clothes (or warm clothes during the cooler months)
- Nappies and wipes or several pairs of underpants (if toilet training)
- Bedding for nap time, including a pillow, sheets in a drawstring bag, and a blanket

**Please clearly label your child's name on ALL personal belongings.**

## Arriving at the centre

- Children can be dropped off at the centre by their parent/guardian or another responsible adult (over 18 years of age).
- Parents/guardians must **always** sign-in their child – this is a legal requirement. Parents/guardians should also make classroom staff aware of their child's arrival and hand over to the classroom team.
- To ensure all children at the centre can enjoy a consistent routine, please arrive promptly for your daily session start time. Late arrivals may be requested to wait for a suitable time to enter the classroom.
- Parents/guardians must let staff know if their child will be absent from the centre (e.g. due to sickness). Please note notice periods apply to waive fees.

## Mealtimes

### Dietary requirements and allergies

Because children with autism often have a limited diet due to sensory aversions, families are asked to pack food for their child.

Please note we are not able to heat food for your child.

All AEIOU centres are nut-free.

If your child has a food allergy, it is important you notify your Centre Manager and provide any relevant management plan. If circumstances change, let your Centre Manager know and update your child's enrolment documentation.

### Birthdays

Birthdays are very special events for children, not just because of the cultural and social significance of these celebrations but also because of treats!

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday with their AEIOU friends, you're welcome to send individual cupcakes or treats for your child to share.

Please let us know so that we can notify other parents in advance, particular those of children who have allergies.





## Toys from home

Of course children may love a particular toy from home, but we ask that personal toys from home are not brought to the centre. Children with ASD have challenges understanding concepts of ownership and sharing, so toys from home often create upset in the classroom.

In addition, our team can't take responsibility for personal toys which become lost or broken.

## Rest time

The timetable allows 30 minutes of rest time every day to ensure the needs of each child is met in education, play and rest. AEIOU provides individual rest mats for children should they choose to sleep.

However, we've seen that many of the children we support do not sleep during the day. In this instance, staff may supervise 'down time' with quiet, independent activities for children.

## Toileting

Children with autism often have challenges with toileting. If tailored supports such as intensive toilet training are agreed as part of your child's Schedule of Supports, our team will work together with you to create a 'toilet training plan' that is appropriate for your child's skill set and development.

Please note, as with any support strategy, consistency is key. Families are partners in therapy and should use provided resources and work to implement strategies discussed with our team in the home.

## Departing the centre

- Parents/guardians must ensure classroom staff are aware of their child's departure and always sign-out – this is a legal requirement.
- Children will only be released to authorised persons (as within enrolment documentation).
- To authorise another person to collect your child from the centre, you must complete a Parent/Carer Authorisation Form, available from your Centre Manager. This must be completed prior to pick-up.
- Authorised persons must be 18 years of age, and provide photo identification on first pick-up.

## Excursions and incursions

To support children in becoming more familiar with changes in routine and new experiences, our team organise excursions and incursions throughout the year.

Before any planned excursion, our team conducts a risk assessment. We will issue a letter to your family with all the relevant details, including any costs involved, to seek written consent for you and your child's participation.

Excursions are an opportunity for families to enjoy a supported experience in the community with their child. Please note, while our team will be in attendance to support you, you will be responsible for transporting and looking after your child.

## Keeping children safe

### Button batteries

If button batteries get into the wrong hands (or mouths), the consequences can be serious (or even fatal) within a matter of hours.

Devices or toys that contain button batteries are not allowed into the centre to ensure children's safety.

### Sun safety

AEIOU is a SunSmart organisation, and is committed to minimising children's UVR exposure throughout the day. Please ensure your child is dressed in sun-safe clothing, brings a hat and is wearing sunscreen before leaving your child at the centre in the morning. Sunscreen will be reapplied 20 minutes prior to morning play and again following rest time.

## Medical information

### Medications

If your child requires medication to be administered, it is essential to meet with your Centre Manager to discuss as soon as possible. Our team is responsible for conducting a risk assessment and developing an appropriate action plan.

It is illegal for medication to be kept in a child's bag or belongings while at the centre. Medication must be given to your centre team and you will need to complete a Room Medication Record.

All medications provided must be in date, appropriately labelled, and in original packaging.

If a child requires long-term medication to be administered, you must provide a Long-Term Medication Form from your child's doctor.

Please note Australian legislation classifies some medications as S4 Restricted or S8 Controlled (i.e. prescribed restricted substances). If your child requires medications of this type during the day when they are at the centre, please discuss with your Centre Manager prior to enrolment. Your Centre Manager will discuss with you the NDIS and childcare documents you must complete and the protocols that must take place for us to meet legal requirements.

### Medical conditions

If your child has a serious medical condition, such as asthma, epilepsy, anaphylaxis, diabetes, you will need to obtain a Medical Condition Action Plan from your child's doctor and share this with your Centre Manager. Our team is responsible for creating a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan. If there is any change to your child's needs, please share this with your Centre Manager immediately.

### Illness at the centre

If your child is unwell, we kindly request that you keep them home to protect the health safety and wellbeing of others at the centre.

A 24-hour exclusion period will apply to any child who has been administered Panadol or Nurofen prior to coming to service and any child who has been sent home from service with a temperature above 38C degrees.



# BEHIND THE SCENES

## Hours of operation

Our service operates from 7.00am - 5.00pm from Monday to Friday. Families can choose to enrol their child for 8-hour sessions (from 8.00am to 4.00pm) or 10-hour sessions (7.00am to 5.00pm).

## Signing in and out

We use a digital platform to monitor children's attendance at our centres and to conduct mandatory reporting. This is done through a digital kiosk in the centre's reception area.

Under Australian law, parents/carers and any authorised persons are responsible for signing children in and out of service during drop-off and pick-up times.

If your family receives Child Care Subsidy (CCS), you need to sign in/out to ensure the correct CCS is applied to your account. Our staff are happy to assist you with using the kiosk at the reception.

## Absences

Parents/carers must let the Centre Manager know if their child will be absent (e.g. due to sickness). Please refer to the AEIOU Service Agreement for guidelines regarding short-notice cancellations.

For families who receive CCS, Family Assistance Law affords a number of allowable absence days per child each financial year. Service providers are required to record all absences (regardless of notice). Please note: if your child is absent for more days than the allowable limit, your CCS may not apply and full childcare fees may be payable.

Please note, extended absences may have an impact on your CCS and your enrolment. Please contact your Centre Manager for any planned, long-term absences.

Furthermore, by Family Assistance law conditions, CCS is not paid on absent days at the beginning or ending of a booking. Please see 'Cancelling an enrolment' on page 11 for more details.

## Late collection

It is important to collect your child on time. If you are delayed to collect your child, you must phone the centre and provide an estimated time of arrival.

If this does not occur, our team will attempt to contact authorised persons to arrange for immediate collection, starting with the primary parent/carer, then alternate emergency contacts as listed within the child's enrolment documentation.

If you do not arrive within 30 minutes of the service closing, our team will contact local police and release the child into their care.

Like many long day care services, AEIOU charges late fees to cover the cost of the team's time and extended service operation. Late fees are charged at \$15 for the first 5 minutes, plus \$2 per every minute thereafter.

## Centre closures

AEIOU services are open 48 weeks of the year, with a one-week mid-year break and a three-week closure at the end of the year. All important dates are detailed online at [aeiou.org.au/calendar](http://aeiou.org.au/calendar).

Regular childcare fees apply on public holidays. This is in line with the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) guidelines and with many other service providers. Fees are not charged during centre closure periods, on staff development days, or if your AEIOU centre cannot open for service as planned (e.g. due to a natural disaster).

## Our fees

Because our service is a combination of specialised childcare and early intervention therapies, our fees are split into two components: childcare fees, and therapy service fees.

Similarly, our service is structured so that families can access support from the Federal Government (through the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) for childcare fees, and the NDIS for therapy-related fees). Because each family's fees will vary according to your circumstances, we ask that you contact our Family Support team for a quote.

To help ensure you receive reasonable and necessary funding throughout the duration of your child's enrolment, our Family Support team can assist.

## Financial hardship

At AEIOU, we believe that cost should never be a barrier to a family accessing early intervention. We strive to ensure our service is affordable and accessible to all families. If you need financial support, you can read more at [aeiou.org.au/our-fee-structure](http://aeiou.org.au/our-fee-structure).

## Payment of fees

AEIOU issues invoices for all services on a weekly basis in arrears (after services have been delivered).

- **Childcare:** Invoices and statements are sent weekly via email.
- **Therapy:** Invoices are issued weekly, and monthly statements are provided on the first day of the following month.

Fees can be paid via direct debit, Centrepay, BPAY, direct deposit or credit card.

## Therapy vacancies

In the event of a therapy vacancy at your centre (i.e. a speech pathologist, occupational therapist, or behaviour consultant/analyst is not available for any period), AEIOU will not charge for this. Your Schedule of Supports will be adjusted so families are able to access external therapies if they choose.

However, rest assured your child's goals will continue to be supported by the specialist staff in the centre and senior clinicians will provide training and support to those staff members.





### Making changes to enrolment

If you need to make changes to your child's enrolment (e.g. change of contact details, to NDIS funding, from full-time to part-time when transitioning to school), you will need to complete a Change of Enrolment form, available from your Centre Manager. You must provide a minimum of 14 days' notice when changing your child's enrolment type.

### Cancelling an enrolment

If you decide to cancel your child's enrolment, you will need to complete a Change of Enrolment form, available from and signed by your Centre Manager. You must provide a minimum of 14 days' notice prior to your child's last day physically attending at the centre.

Please note: by law, CCS ends from your child's last day of attendance at the centre. If your child stops attending the centre before your cancellation notice period ends, you may be liable to pay full childcare fees (without CCS).

### Immunisation requirements

Depending on the state or territory you live in, if your child is not immunised for reasons other than those medically approved, you may not be able to enrol in a childcare service or you may not be eligible for Child Care Subsidy.

To find out more about immunisation requirements, visit the Department of Human Services website: [humanservices.gov.au](http://humanservices.gov.au).

### Service suspension

An enrolment may be temporarily suspended if the following occurs:

- Contraction of infectious disease(s)
- Outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease for a non-immunised child
- Behavioural or medical conditions outside the constraints of the service
- If autism is not the primary diagnosis of your child
- Failure to comply with AEIOU's Client Code of Conduct
- Safety of any worker or child is threatened or abused
- Children, workers or the child themselves at risk of harm

- Inability to fulfil financial obligations (fee payment) to the service
- Inability to fulfil obligations under the AEIOU Service Agreement

If you wish to discuss suspension of a service for a personal reason, please speak with your Centre Manager in the first instance.

### Service termination

AEIOU Foundation reserves the right to terminate an enrolment in the best interest of the organisation. AEIOU agrees to give families reasonable notice of an intention to exercise this right and will refund any payments in credit.

## NDIS Service Agreement

As stipulated by the NDIA, the purpose of the NDIS Service Agreement is to establish a contract of service for the provision of early childhood early intervention and associated supports as agreed to between the parent/carer and AEIOU Foundation. It relates to the child identified in the Agreement, where all eligibility and access requirements are met.

This agreement shall continue in force while the eligibility and access requirements continue to be met, unless either party cancels the agreement. This agreement is contingent on the availability of relevant NDIS funding under a participant's NDIS Plan, which will be reviewed and amended from time to time by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). A Schedule of Supports attached to the service agreement will be reviewed and updated in accordance with the child's current NDIS Plan and associated commencement dates.

Families are also responsible for keeping AEIOU up-to-date on their NDIS plan budget and funding so we can work with you to ensure your child is able to consistently access our quality service.

## Supporting your child together

### Your rights and responsibilities

At AEIOU, you have the right to:

- A quality service that is safe and responsive to the social and cultural requirements of your individual and/or family unit
- Be involved in all planning and review decisions regarding your child's program
- Access all information about your child held by AEIOU Foundation
- Access information about our service and requirements to enable you to make informed decisions
- Involve an advocate or support person of your choice to represent your interests
- Confidentiality, privacy and dignity
- Raise concerns or complaints without fear of retribution, and to have issues dealt with in a fair and prompt manner
- Information regarding the program, management structure and organisational directions
- Interpreter services or other supports in instances where parents/carers require assistance with requirements relating to the service

### As a parent/carer of a child enrolled at AEIOU, you are responsible for:

- Interacting with other parents and staff respectfully and collaboratively
- Assisting in the review of your child's program
- Implementing home activities/plans developed as part of the child's ongoing program to ensure consistency across settings
- Making arrangements that meet drop-off and pick-up requirements
- Providing the necessary medical and health reports which will enable us to develop and provide appropriate services to your child
- Informing AEIOU of changes to contact details, authorised persons, custodial conflicts or court orders
- Keeping staff updated on changes in medication and diet that the child may be undergoing
- Identifying risks the organisation may have to consider in service provision
- Raising concerns or complaints with us first and working collaboratively with the team to resolve issues
- Supporting AEIOU in fundraising initiatives where possible

### Parent engagement

As parents and carers, your involvement and participation in your child's learning journey at AEIOU is integral to early intervention success.

Our specialised staff work with each family to share knowledge, strategies and resources to ensure that learning is carried from the educational setting into the child's home and community environments.

Parent engagement sessions – where you can meet with your child's therapists and better understand your child's learning journey and how to support their learning at home – are included in every Learner Package.

Parents and carers also have access to family education sessions on topics across the curriculum, including positive behaviour support, play and social skills.

Visit [aeiou.org.au/workshops](http://aeiou.org.au/workshops) for further details.

### Communication

We like communicating with you! Open, two-way communication with our team is our preference, and we do this through emails, noticeboards, parent pockets, formal meetings and face-to-face at the centre.

We value the intimate knowledge that you have of your child and lean on this wherever we can. It helps us best support your child's individual needs.

Should you require further information regarding your child's progress or wish to raise a concern, please make an appointment with your Centre Manager.

### Code of Conduct

We expect respectful behaviour from everyone in our AEIOU community, including our team and families. For families, this means behaving and interacting with other parents and the AEIOU team safely, with courtesy and respect.

There is zero tolerance to bullying, intimidation, discrimination or harassment of staff or other parents and guardians. In the unlikely event of this behaviour, AEIOU reserves the right to take action.

Please refer to AEIOU's Client Code of Conduct for more details.



## Policies and procedures

AEIOU has established policies and procedures to ensure the quality care of each child in our service. You can access a copy of these documents at the centre.

Parents, carers, and their families and visitors should be aware of AEIOU's policies and processes, and are expected to follow these as directed.

Core policies and procedures include:

- Advocacy Services Procedure
- Breast and Bottle Feeding Procedure
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Community Experiences Procedure
- Conflicts of Interest Procedure
- Delivery and Collection of Children Procedure
- Early Childhood Supports Policy
- Feedback Complaints Management and Resolution Policy, & Feedback Complaints and Resolution (Clients) Procedure
- Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Medical Condition Policy and Administration of Medication Policy
- Payment of Fees Policy
- Privacy Notice Policy
- Quality Management System Policy
- Respect and Rights of Children Policy
- Restrictive Practices Procedure
- Service Access and Exit Procedure
- Service and Program Delivery Procedure
- Service Provision Policy
- Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Procedure
- Social Media Guidelines for Parents and Carers
- Sun Safety Policy

If you can't find what you're looking for, please ask Centre Management and they will be only too pleased to help.

### A note on licensing

In Queensland, AEIOU is licensed through the Department of Education in accordance with the Education & Care Services Act 2013.

In South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, our service is regulated by the National Quality Framework (NQF). Further information can be obtained through the Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) [acecqa.gov.au](http://acecqa.gov.au).

## AEIOU on social media

Follow us on social media to see what our community gets up to all around the country.

Parents and carers should be mindful about how they communicate on social media.



Before posting, ask yourself: 'Why am I posting this?' 'Who can see it?' 'Is it compromising?' and 'What could the outcome be?'

At no time is it acceptable to identify a child, family or staff member from an AEIOU service without express permission.

For more information, refer to AEIOU's Social Media Guidelines for Parents and Carers.

## Taking photos in the centres

It's great to have memories of your child at our centres, but we ask that parents and carers respect the privacy for all children and staff.

Please only take photos of your own child whilst they are at the centres. At no time should other children, family or staff members be photographed or have an image reproduced without their express permission.

## Have feedback for us?

We aim to provide services that meet the needs of our clients (you!) and our stakeholders, and meet statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements.

We adopt a "best practice" approach to monitor, measure, respond to, and improve your client experience and satisfaction. Because of our commitment to continuous improvement, we encourage you to contribute to all areas of service provision by telling us about your experiences.

Do you have a question, concern or feedback? Please share it with us at [aeiou.org.au/feedback](http://aeiou.org.au/feedback).



## Research

AEIOU's Research & Assessment team focuses on how we can achieve better outcomes for children with autism and their families. Research helps us to reflect on our service and improve what we do to better meet child needs and better support families. The Autism Research and Innovation Committee (ARIC) acts as the gatekeeper for research both internally and external to AEIOU, and defines the research priority areas for research conducted at AEIOU.

You will be invited to participate in research activities. This is strongly encouraged though not mandatory.

We also ask some information about your family background in our enrolment package which we may ask to use for research. This information helps us to understand the families accessing our service and helps us to ensure our program works for all families.

Participation of families is vital in achieving our goals for research as set by the Autism Research & Innovation Committee (ARIC). To find out more visit [aeiou.org.au/research](http://aeiou.org.au/research).

## Fundraising

While fees cover the delivery of each child's therapy, education and care supports, there are a range of overhead costs AEIOU incurs. We rely on the kindness and generosity of the community to help provide funding for areas such as building construction and maintenance, educational resources, community engagement activities, and new industry research.

AEIOU's Fundraising team manages all aspects of giving at AEIOU and works closely with centre teams in philanthropic fundraising endeavours.

We welcome the caring support of our community to raise awareness and much-needed funds so that we can better support even more children with autism to live their best lives.

There are many ways that individuals, community groups and organisations can support:

- Making a donation
- Workplace Giving
- Becoming a Partner (Community Group or Corporate)
- Attending or hosting an event

If you want to get involved or make a donation, visit [aeiou.org.au/support-aeiou](http://aeiou.org.au/support-aeiou).

## A universal approach

AEIOU welcomes families and staff from culturally diverse backgrounds.

To learn more about our service in your preferred language other than English, head to [aeiou.org.au/other-languages](http://aeiou.org.au/other-languages)





# COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

## Mental health & wellbeing support

We know many families experience mental health and/or financial stress. Please know practical advice is available.

We recommend the below organisations for independent and confidential counselling services which may be able to assist families during challenging times.

### Beyond Blue

[beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)

1300 224 636

### Lifeline

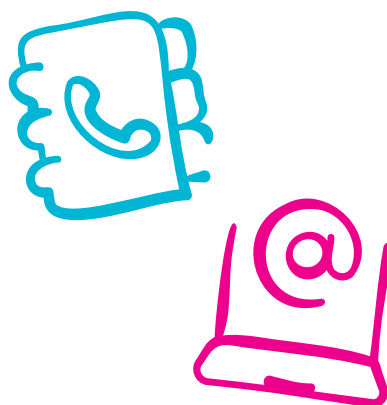
[lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)

131 114

### Salvation Army

[salvos.org.au/need-help/financial-assistance](http://salvos.org.au/need-help/financial-assistance)

13 72 58



## Government services

### National Disability Insurance Scheme

[ndis.gov.au](http://ndis.gov.au)

1800 800 110

### NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission

[ndiscommission.gov.au](http://ndiscommission.gov.au)

### Office of Fair Trading (Qld)

[qld.gov.au/law/fair-trading](http://qld.gov.au/law/fair-trading)

### Consumer and Business Services (SA)

[cbs.sa.gov.au](http://cbs.sa.gov.au)

### Access Canberra Fair Trading (ACT)

[accesscanberra.act.gov.au/consumer-rights](http://accesscanberra.act.gov.au/consumer-rights)

### Department of Education (Qld)

[qed.qld.gov.au](http://qed.qld.gov.au)

1800 637 711

### Department for Education (SA)

[education.sa.gov.au](http://education.sa.gov.au)

1800 088 158

### ACT Education Directorate

[education.act.gov.au](http://education.act.gov.au)

02 6205 5429

## Private therapists

To find a private therapist, speak with your GP for a local service listing or contact the relevant organisation:

### Occupational Therapy Australia

[otaus.com.au/find-an-ot](http://otaus.com.au/find-an-ot)

### Speech Pathology Australia

[speechpathologyaustralia.org.au](http://speechpathologyaustralia.org.au)

### Australian Psychological Society

[psychology.org.au](http://psychology.org.au)

### Physiotherapy Board of Australia

[physiotherapyboard.gov.au](http://physiotherapyboard.gov.au)

## Other autism support services

- Autism Awareness Australia
- Autism Connect
- Autism Hub
- Autism Queensland
- Autism SA
- Raising Children Network
- Carers Queensland
- Carers SA
- Family and Child Connect
- Relationships Australia

# AEIOU'S SERVICE MODEL: GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS



Support	Description	Frequency	Delivered by
Early intervention therapy	Targeted intervention working towards short term learning goals developed by the child's clinical team and informed by NDIS goals and family priority areas.	Daily	Early Intervention Specialist Early Childhood Teacher Room Leader In a 1:4 ratio
Naturalistic early intervention	<p>Naturalistic early intervention strategy occurs during daily routine activities and capitalises on children's preferred interests, needs, and abilities as expressed in the moment. Educators find ways to incorporate opportunities individualised teaching strategies throughout the day during naturally occurring routines and interactions such as morning arrival, mealtime, play and leisure activities and personal care.</p> <p>Naturalistic activities are planned by the Early Childhood Teacher / Room Leader, including mapping the AEIOU curriculum to the daily classroom curriculum goals (alongside the Early Years Learning Framework) to ensure children are overcoming barriers to mainstream readiness including practising generalisation of skills.</p>		Early Intervention Specialist Early Childhood Teacher Room Leader In a 1:4 ratio
Co-constructed learning / specialised childcare	Specialised centre-wide childcare that occurs between 7am to 9am and 3pm to 5pm. AEIOU Foundation is a licensed provider of long day care. Our focus on this education and childcare means children are supported to access the early education their peers access in traditional or mainstream settings.		Early Intervention Specialist Early Childhood Teacher Room Leader In a 1:4 ratio
Embedded therapy sessions	Therapists will deliver therapeutic supports to the children on their caseload. This can include working towards individualised goals; problem solving barriers to learning; assessing progress; and assessing new goals for each child.	Weekly	Clinical team: Occupational Therapist (OT), Speech Pathologist (SP), Behaviour Analyst / Consultant (BA / BC)
Therapy programming	<p>Non-contact time for therapists to be able to complete necessary documentation and reporting. This is inclusive of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing individual strategies and therapy supports for the child and family, to be used at home and AEIOU (within naturalistic early intervention and embedded therapy sessions)</li> <li>• Reviewing and programming individual curriculum goals for each child</li> <li>• Problem-solving barriers to learning</li> <li>• Report writing – preparation of Progress Reports for NDIS plan reviews</li> <li>• Planning for parent engagement sessions centred on integrated child-parent capacity building</li> </ul>		

Support	Description	Frequency	Delivered by
Clinical Team & Room Leader / Early Childhood Teacher meeting	Therapists and Early Childhood Teacher / Room Leader discuss the Early Years Learning Framework paired with curriculum goals for generalisation to be delivered during naturalistic early intervention.	Fortnightly	Clinical team and Room Leader / Early Childhood Teacher
NDIS Goal Mapping Meeting	The clinical team meets with the family to discuss the child's NDIS goals and family priorities, and to develop an individual plan of short-term goals to be prioritised and implemented.	Per Block	Clinical Team Room Leader / Early Childhood Teacher (when required)
Parent Engagement Sessions	These sessions provide parent/carer goal development and training which can occur either on site or via telehealth sessions (depending on needs of the family and child). Families can directly observe child progress and develop their own skills to support their child within the home and community.		One member of clinical team per session: Occupational Therapist (OT), Speech Pathologist (SP), or Behaviour Analyst / Consultant (BA/BC)
Family Education Sessions	Regular webinars and in-person workshops designed to build parents skills and confidence in areas including but not limited to communication, behaviour, mealtimes, toileting and school readiness		Program Coordinators (senior therapy teams)
Tailored support	Additional supports that will be delivered as pre- agreed with the families (for the Block i.e. 12 week period). Examples include intensive toilet training, transition supports, behaviour supports, home/community visits.	As agreed	Clinical team and/or Early Intervention Specialist
Standardised assessments	The following standardised assessments are used to assess each child's progress at AEIOU <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales – Third Edition (VABS-3)</li> <li>Mullen Scales of Early Learning – AGS Edition</li> </ul>	At regular intervals	Assessment Coordinator
Case management	A member of the clinical team is allocated to oversee each child's clinical documentation and reporting. This includes organising NDIS goal mapping meetings, overseeing NDIS progress reporting, and providing parents with Individual Plan (IP) updates		

# CONTACT US

## Central Office support

	Phone	Email
General enquiries	(07) 3320 7500	info@aeiou.org.au
Family Support	(07) 3320 7500	familysupport@aeiou.org.au
Billing	(07) 3320 7560	billing@aeiou.org.au
Enrolments	1300 273 435	enrolments@aeiou.org.au
Research	(07) 3320 7531	research@aeiou.org.au
Fundraising	(07) 3320 7524	giving@aeiou.org.au, events@aeiou.org.au
Marketing, Communications & Advocacy	(07) 3320 7520	communications@aeiou.org.au

## Centre location

	Phone	Email
Adelaide	(08) 8306 4900	adelaide@aeiou.org.au
Bald Hills	(07) 3889 7751	baldhills@aeiou.org.au
Bundaberg	(07) 4155 0399	bundaberg@aeiou.org.au
Canberra	(02) 6189 5678	canberra@aeiou.org.au
Camira	(07) 3381 8767	camira@aeiou.org.au
Gold Coast	(07) 5618 5888	goldcoast@aeiou.org.au
Logan	(07) 3094 8700	logan@aeiou.org.au
Nathan	(07) 3320 7900	nathan@aeiou.org.au
Sippy Downs	(07) 5452 0300	sippydowns@aeiou.org.au
Toowoomba	(07) 4636 3600	toowoomba@aeiou.org.au
Townsville	(07) 4773 2898	townsville@aeiou.org.au



Registered office:

Level 1, 60 Leichhardt Street, Spring Hill QLD 4000

 07 3320 7500

 PO Box 107, Spring Hill QLD 4004

 info@aeiou.org.au | aeiou.org.au

ABN: 19 135 897 255 | Registered Charity CH1818

aeiou.org.au