



St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool

Parent Handbook

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City of
Norwood
Payneham
& St Peters

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Introduction

Welcome to the St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool.

The Centre is licensed for 94 children.

Emerald	0 - 2 years a maximum of 12 children (3 educators)
Ruby	0 - 2 years a maximum of 16 children (4 educators)
Aquamarine	2 - 3 years a maximum of 15 children (3 educators)
Diamond	2 - 3 years a maximum of 15 children (3 educators)
Amethyst	3 – 4 years a maximum of 18 children (3 educators)
Preschool	4 – 5 years a maximum of 18 children (2 educators)

These age groupings are approx. and will fluctuate depending upon the demand and needs of the Centre and children moving within the learning environment. Children will transition through the groups according to the day/days available and the group size.

We hope that you and your child/ren will enjoy your time with us. Please come and talk with me at any time you have a query or a suggestion that you wish to discuss.

I look forward to getting to know you and your family and to working together to provide the best possible care for your child.

Alice Parsons
Centre Director

Management Committee

The Centre is owned by the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters Council who is the organisation responsible for overseeing the Centre's management and ensuring National Quality Standards are maintained.

The Management Committee consists of the Director, parent representatives and Council representatives and is responsible for the Centre's overall strategic direction. Minutes of quarterly meetings are displayed in the front foyer for your information.

Centre Policies

A parent policy folder is located on the table in the foyer for your information. All policies and procedures are available for you to access and if you would like a copy please see the Director or Administration Officer.

Centre Philosophy

We believe:

In Relation to Education:

***We aim to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to school age through using the Early Years Learning Framework curriculum.**

***All children have the right to education in a safe, happy and stimulating environment. Each child is supported, free of bias, in a diverse, enriched atmosphere and encouraged to have a voice, through investigating and learning through play.**

*** We believe in creating a sustainable environment, helping children to look after their future world.**

*** We encourage children in an environment that reflects the cultural diversity of Australia, by providing opportunities that facilitate choice, independence, inquiry, self-esteem, communication and social interactions in a nurturing and supportive environment.**

In Relation to Families and Communities:

*** Educators create genuine, trusting partnerships with families, valuing each other's contributions to the child's education and wellbeing.**

*** By working alongside each child and their families, we help create both shared and individual goals and interests, and are helping the child have a sense of Being, Belonging and Becoming. Helping them prepare for the next stage in their journey.**

*** Supporting children and families to embrace our multi-cultural community, ensuring a sense of belonging for everybody.**

*** Developing interactions with valued members of our community, helps to open up opportunities, connections and learning for our children, families and Educators.**

*** Educators honour the histories, cultures, practices, languages and life style choices of the families.**

In Relation to Staffing:

*** By upholding our organisational values; Working Together, Leadership, Excellence, Integrity, Service & Our People, we can educate, grow and continue to learn ourselves. While we celebrate our successes we also recognise there is always room for growth and room to improve. Through these methods we strive to create an inclusive practice with an educational environment rich in opportunity.**

***By respecting each Educator's diversity and pedagogical practices, we help support each other to educate, grow and thrive in an enriched environment.**

National Quality Standard

The Centre participates in the new National Quality Standard to ensure our services provide the best possible level of early childhood education and care for your child.

The new National Quality Standard is divided into seven areas with a total of 23 standards that contribute to the quality of early education and care.

- 1 Educational program and practice
- 2 Children's health and safety
- 3 Physical environment
- 4 Staffing arrangements
- 5 Relationships with children
- 6 Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- 7 Leadership and service management

St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool will participate in the assessment process on our performance across the seven quality areas and given one overall rating which to provide a picture of the quality of care and learning at the service.

The Centre will develop a Quality Improvement Plan to outline how our service is, or is not, meeting the National Quality Standard. The Centre will develop and/or update our Quality Improvement Plan annually and keep it on site and available for review by the regulator in addition to submitting it to the regulator prior to full assessment.

There are five levels against which services across Australia will be assessed based on the National Quality Standard.

- **Significant Improvement Needed:** indicates that a service is not meeting the standard and the regulator is working closely with the service to immediately improve its quality. If there is no improvement the centre will be closed.
- **Working Towards National Quality Standard :** indicates that a service is working towards meeting the standard. All new services will commence operating with an Operating Level rating.
- **Meeting National Quality Standard:** indicates that a service is meeting the standard.
- **Exceeding National Quality Standard :** indicates that a service is exceeding the National Quality Standard.
- **Excellent:** indicates that a service demonstrated excellence and is recognized as a leader in the sector. Services will need to apply to be assessed against the rating.

For more information about the National Quality Standard and the new National Law and Regulations please see www.aceqa.gov.au

Priority of Access

St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool offers care to all children between the ages of 6 weeks to 5 years, regardless of their gender, race, culture, religion, social status, or parent's or child's disability.

The commonwealth government has determined priority of access guidelines for child care centres, places will be offered in line with these guidelines:

1. A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
2. A child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy the work/training/study test under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act.
3. Any other child.

Parents should note that a family of non working parents who are using our centre may be required to change day/s of care for a family with a higher priority child/ren.

At the time of completing your waiting list application you are required to contact the Centre every three months to confirm your on-going interest and to maintain you place on our waiting list. Vacancies are allocated according to the date of application, days available, Centre movement and room availability.

Child Care Subsidy (Fee Reduction)

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is a payment from the Commonwealth Government to help families with the cost of child care. To find out if you are eligible for the Child Care Subsidy reduction you need to apply to the Family Assistance Office (FAO) ph. 13 6150, where you will be required to provide an estimate of your family income and activity hours for the relevant year. It is important that families remember that during the time that their child is at the Centre, they are required to advise the FAO of any changes to their circumstances such as changes to income or a child commencing school.

Attendance information is electronically reported to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) in Canberra each week and sent back to us once the CCS has been calculated.

At the end of the financial year, or once your tax returns have been completed, the FAO works out your entitlement using actual income details and this entitlement is compared with the fee reductions you have received during the year. If you received less fee reductions than you were entitled to, the FAO will make a 'top-up' payment. If you received more fee reduction than you were entitled to, the FAO may recover some money from you

Families who receive CCS are entitled to 42 allowable absences (days the FAO will still pay your CCS), these include public holidays that occur on any booked day.

It is a requirement of CCS and licensing that parents sign their child in and out each day so that we are aware of all children in the building at any one time.

Regardless of whether you receive CCS or not, on starting child care you need to provide the office with the date of birth and customer reference numbers (CRN's) of both the account holder and the child starting care as soon as possible.

Hours of Operation

Monday to Friday 7.30am – 6.00pm

The Centre is open 51 weeks of the year except for public holidays.

Christmas Closure

We close on the last weekday at 3pm, before Christmas Day in December and reopen on the first working week in January. As these dates change yearly, a communication is issued to all parents in November, which details the Christmas Closure. A fee is not charged for this period.

Fees

The Centre has a comprehensive Fee Policy which must be signed when your child is accepted. Normal fees will be charged for allowable absences when your child is absent from the Centre on their normal booking. Payment ensures that your child's position is held.

Holding Fee

Once you have accepted a place with the Centre a \$100 holding fee is required. Once you start the holding Fee will be carried over to form your bond or part of your bond. If you choose not to start at the Centre, you will need to give a minimum of 2 weeks' notice prior to starting if you are requiring your holding fee to be refunded.

Late Fee

The Centre closes at 6.00pm after this time a late fee will apply for the first 15 minutes or part there off, and every 10 minutes after that. Failure to pay late fees will result in the loss of a booked place at the Centre.

If your child/ren has not been collected and no contacts can be reached, the Department of Human Services, Family and Youth Services or Crisis Care will be contacted and the child will be placed into their care.

Accounts & Payments

Accounts are issued on a weekly basis and are emailed. All accounts must be paid in full each week. Payments can be made by eftpos, credit card (sorry no American Express), cheque, credit card slip (manual transaction) or the Centre's preference direct debit each week or fortnight from your nominated account or credit card. If you would like to set up direct debit payments please see the Manager or Administration Officer.

Accounts that remain outstanding after two weeks will be stamped with a reminder notice. Accounts that remain outstanding after this will receive a first letter requesting payment. A second letter will be issued for accounts that remain outstanding after 4 weeks and failing payment within 7 days, care will be cancelled and the account may be placed in the hands of a Debt Collection Agency.

If you are experiencing difficulties with payment please discuss these with the Centre Director. The Centre offers reasonable payment plan options for debt recovery.

Withdrawal from Child Care & Alterations to Bookings

Two weeks written giving a full two weeks' notice of withdrawal is required; if no notice is given, two weeks fees will be charged in lieu.

If you require additional emergency care, are taking annual leave, or need to alter you child's booking, please fill in the details in writing or the white form giving two weeks notice. The Centre Director will confirm these changes as soon as possible.

Emergency/Occasional Care Bookings

The Centre is at times able to offer emergency/occasional care to our existing families. The allocation of casual care bookings will take into account a range of factors (day, age group, educator to child ratios and date of application of request) this ensures that all allocations are offered in a fair and equitable manner. All requests for emergency/occasional care must be made either by email or if by phone to the Director or Administration Officer will document the request.

Families are required to confirm acceptance of the date within 24 hours of it being offered.

Child Collection & Access Order

Please sign your child in and out on the daily booking lists; it is your responsibility to notify educators of who is going to collect your child/ren and at approximately what time. Each child should be brought into the Centre and accepted by an educator.

No child will be released from the Centre to any person other than those nominated on the enrolment form. In the case of an emergency, please telephone the Centre with a name and description of the person nominated to collect the child/ren. A driver's licence will need to be sighted, photocopied and noted as evidence of identity.

Child care centres are obliged to comply with current court orders, please provide the Centre with a copy of any existing court orders, any changes to access/custody and to persons authorised to collect children must be made in writing.

Orientation

Where possible we suggest that you gradually introduce your child/ren into child care. Parents are encouraged to visit the Centre and stay with their child prior to commencement for one hour. These visits can be as often as you would like prior to the commencement of care and are at no cost provided you remain on the premises. This allows an opportunity for children to become familiar with the Centre and carers, and gives parents the chance to share information regarding their child and their routines with primary caregivers.

Once your child/ren has commenced, parents are encouraged to phone through the day to check on how their child/ren are progressing through the day.

Primary Caregiving

We value the relationship that the children within our Centre share with the educator, in addition to recognizing how these secure attachments ensure that all children feel valued, safe and supported within the child care environment. During your child's orientation period they will be assigned a 'Primary caregiver', an educator within their room who will be responsible for establishing a secure base for your child. Your child's primary caregiver will spend time building a relationship with your child and learning about their needs, interests and routines. We believe that secure happy children have a willingness to explore experiment and respond to their surroundings by knowing that a supportive adult is nearby, and therefore have greater success in their learning.

Educators & Students

One of the most important elements of child care is having warm and caring educators who understand the needs of children and their families. Our educators have a range of qualifications, training and experience. Each room will consist of at least one qualified child care worker and experienced/trained assistants.

We frequently have students from TAFE, University of South Australia and school students on work experience learning about child care. They are under supervision and are given duties suitable for their development.

Immunisation

Children by law need to be up to date with Immunisation before and during their time in the Centre. This is the parent's responsibility to keep their child up to date with immunisations and provide the updated status administration staff of the Centre.

Illness

A child who displays the following symptoms may be required to be collected from the Centre at short notice:

1. A child who has diarrhoea (two consecutive loose motions).
2. A child who has been vomiting.
3. A child who has head lice.
4. A child who has inflamed or discharging eyes.
5. A child who has a temperature over 38 degrees.

Exclusion

1. Please notify the Director if your child has an Infectious Disease. In case of an Infectious Disease being present in the Centre, a notice will be displayed on the door to each room and written information on the disease will be available where possible.
2. **In the event that your child is sent home with a temperature, unusual spots or rashes or is lethargic, a 24 hour exclusion period from the Centre will apply. This is to ensure that your child is well enough to attend care and to prevent the spread of further infections.**
3. **In the event that your child has an infectious disease, exclusion periods will apply as recommended by the "National Health & Medical Research Council" (Staying Healthy in Child Care 5th Edition).**
4. **The Department of Health requires that children who have diarrhoea and/or vomiting will be required to be excluded from the Centre for a period of 24 hours from the last active bowel movement or vomit. Exclusion period will extend to 48 hours where more than two children in the room have the same symptoms, the Centre will notify you upon collection of your child. This is to ensure that your child has fully recovered and no longer contagious to ensure that the spread of further infections is minimised.**
5. **If your child has experienced any of the symptoms listed we recommend that you keep your child home. Children who present to the Centre with these symptoms will be sent home.**
6. The Centre reserves the right to continue to exclude children if it is believed the child poses a health and safety risk to other children and their carers.
7. A doctor's letter may be required upon return of your child to care.

If your child falls ill at the Centre, children will be monitored; parents/guardians or emergency contact people notified and asked to collect the child as soon as possible.

If a child is in need of urgent medical care, we will call an ambulance and contact parent/s or emergency contact/s immediately. The Centre uses the Women's and Children's Hospital. Remember to call and let us know if your child is not attending for any particular reason by 8.30am on that day.

Isolation Periods for Infectious Disease
Staying Healthy in Child Care 4th Edition 2005

Chicken Pox	Exclude until all blisters are completely dried.
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased on waking.
Diarrhoea or Vomiting	Exclude until ceased a minimum of 24 hours, or Exclude until ceased and a minimum of 48 hours where there are more than two children in the same room with gastro.
Hepatitis A	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery.
Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease	Exclude until well and until all the blisters have dried.
Impetigo (School sores)	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced and sores on exposed surfaces are covered with a dressing.
Head Lice	Exclude until treatment has been provided.
Measles	Exclude for at least four (4) days from the appearance of rash. Note: Non-immunised contact will be excluded until fourteen (14) days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If non-immunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of their first contact with the index case they may return to the Centre.
Meningitis	Exclude until well and has received (Bacterial) appropriate antibiotics.
Meningococcal Infection	Exclude until appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed.
Mumps	Exclude for at least nine (9) days after onset of symptoms. Note: Non-immunised contacts may be excluded.
Ringworm (Scabies, Pediculosis (lice), Trachoma)	Exclude until the day after treatment has commenced.
Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four (4) days after the onset of rash. Note: Non-immunised contacts may be excluded.

Streptococcal Infection
(Including Scarlet Fever)

Exclude until the child/adult has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the person feels well.

Tuberculosis

Exclude until production of medical certificate from appropriate health authority.

Whooping Cough
(Pertussis)

Exclude for five (5) days after starting antibiotic treatment or for 21 days from the onset of coughing.
Note: Non-immunised contacts may be excluded. Non-immunised siblings will be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infection or until they have received 5 days of the 14 day course of antibiotics.

Accidents & Emergency

Every effort is made to prevent accidents. However, should an accident occur, educators will take the appropriate action according to the Centre's policy and procedures. An accident report form is kept in each room, showing details of the date, time, nature of the accident, treatment used and who attended. This report must be read and signed by the person collecting the child.

If a child is in need of urgent medical care, we will call an ambulance and contact parent/s or emergency contact/s immediately.

Mandated Notification

In meeting the service's duty of care, and legislative requirements outlined in the Children's Services Act 1985, the management and educators implement and adhere to the service's Child Protection Policy, and ensure a high level of safety and protection to all children who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

Educators are required to attend Mandated Notification training as a basis of initial employment (within the 3 month probation period) and maintain this on a bi- yearly basis.

Mandated Notification training does encompass:

- What child abuse is
- How to identify child abuse
- Why, when and how to make a notification
- How to help and protect a child that has been abused
- The social and political factors associated with child abuse.

The Centre is required to report any suspect incidences of child abuse or neglect to Department for Families and Communities 24 hour Child Abuse Report Line on 131 478, as outlined in mandatory reporting regulations.

Medication

Educators will only administer medications that are prescribed by a doctor, accompanied by a doctor's letter of why, how long and dosage, **NO OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS WILL BE ADMINISTERED, with the exception of teething gels and nappy creams.** This means Panadol can only be given when accompanied by a doctor's letter and instructions, with why Panadol is needed and for how long. All medications need to have the label on the medication Not on the packaging.

If your child has asthma or is anaphylaxis an action plan and medication plan (forms to be provided by the centre) are required to identify the signs, symptoms and triggers and the appropriate course of action, both plans need to be signed by your Doctor and discussed with the Director and Team Leader. Educators will complete a Risk Minimisation Plan in consultation with families and the information provided by the Doctor to:

- Reduce the risks relating to the child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition.
- To ensure that practices and procedures in relation to the safe handling, preparation, consumption and service of food are implemented.
- If relevant, to ensure that practices and procedures to ensure that the parents are notified of any known allergens that pose a risk to a child and strategies for minimising the risk are developed and implemented.
- To ensure that practices and procedures ensuring that all educators can identify the child, the child's medical management plan and the location of the child's medication are developed and implemented.

Medication required treating Asthma and Anaphylaxis are required to be brought into the Centre and clearly named, Anaphylaxis medication must remain at the Centre. **All documentation will be required prior to your child commencing care.**

Medication must be in its original container with a prescription label identifying the child's name, name of medication and dose to be administered. Parents/guardian must fill out the details on the medication form located in your child's room with the name of the medication, the time it is to be administered and the dose, including any other instructions as required by the doctor. This form must be signed by the parent/guardian upon collecting your child to ensure that the medication was given.

Please ensure you inform your child's carer that there is medication to be given so that the medication can be stored correctly and not in your child's bag.

Nutrition

Our policy is to provide a healthy and balanced diet for your child, we aim to provide an eating environment that is safe, positive and supports healthy eating for all children.

Morning tea, a two course lunch, and afternoon tea and a late snack from 5pm are provided for all children taking into consideration specific dietary needs and age groups. Water is available to all children throughout the day, and children are encouraged to drink water at each meal.

Special Dietary Restrictions

Children who have special dietary needs due to allergy/intolerance or religious customs must provide details in writing and discuss them with the Director and Team Leader. These needs will be taken into consideration when preparing your child's meals.

Please note we are a NUT FREE and EGG FREE Centre.

Curriculum

The curriculum is based on the new Early Years Learning Framework and consists of experiences to cater for all developmental areas. Educators use information gained from observations documented on children in their care to determine their level of development, interest, strengths and areas of challenge. This information is used by educators to develop Learning Stories which assist us to document what we are noticing, recognising and responding to in a narrative form to describe how children make sense of their world. Photos will also be used to help identify and explain the learning process and skills within a learning story. Observations also assist staff to plan for specific activities that enhance and assist in meeting each child's specific interests and stage of development. Educators develop individual and group learning outcomes to ensure that children are being challenged and learning opportunities are provided to meet outcomes within the Early Years Learning Framework.

The curriculum is displayed in each room for all parents to see and comment on. If you would like us to include an activity or work on a particular area with your child please let your child's carer know either verbally or in writing. We value and appreciate your support and suggestions. Children's records are maintained and are available to parents upon request. If you would like to discuss your child's progress and development please contact the Director, so that a time can be arranged for educators to be off the floor and available.

Parents are also encouraged to participate in our program by sharing a skill or talent with the children i.e. singing, cooking, dancing etc. Please let us know if you would like to be involved.

Universal Access Preschool

The Centre provides a play-based Preschool curriculum which operates 51 weeks of the year and is developed and implemented by an Early Childhood Teacher. The curriculum is based on the Early Years Learning Framework and supports the individual needs and interest of the children.

The Early Childhood Educators have a focus on working in partnership with families to ensure each child ready for school. This is supported through the following programs:

- Literacy: Jolly phonics and name recognition
- Maths Monster: Number, measure, height, lengths, weight and shapes.
- School Readiness: Social skills & confidence through show and tell.

Special Visitors

The Centre provides a calendar of special events throughout the year. These include special visitors to the Centre such as musical groups, puppets, animal nurseries, physical activity programs and multicultural experiences. Consent forms are given out to families in advance to notify them of any upcoming events and at times there may be a small fee associated with them.

Parental Involvement

We aim to support parents by providing an environment that is comfortable and welcoming, by encouraging parents to be involved as much as they would like to, and through the exchange of information about their child.

The Centre has an open door policy which encourages parents to visit their child at any time of the day. If you are thinking about your child and are wondering how they are, please feel free to phone or come in for a visit.

Parent Grievances

This Centre has an open door policy and encourages parents to come and discuss any of their concerns regarding the Centre or educators, or the care being provided for their child/ren with the Centre Director.

All possible steps will be taken to resolve the problem to the satisfactory conclusion of all parties. All matters will be held in the strictest confidence. The Grievance policy for parents is displayed in the foyer for your information, if you would like a copy please see the Manager.

Educators Rosters

The Centre aims to ensure that you and your child experience consistency in care to foster positive relationships with families and the sharing of information. At times your child's regular carer may be absent and relief educators from our internal pool may not be available. In this event a relief educator from the agency will be required to ensure that ratios are maintained. Wherever possible a notice on the door to your child's room will indicate the periods of absence and replacement educators.

Most educators work a two week rotating roster which means that you may see a different educator from your child's room at the beginning and end of day. Start and finish times of the shifts are varied to ensure that the correct educator to child ratios are maintained throughout the day as required by regulations. In the event that you miss your child's regular carer and would like to speak with them please let us know and we will arrange for them to contact you.

As Educators we base our practice on the Early Childhood Australia Code of ethics, I have attached a copy in the last pages if you would like to have a read.

As positions in The Centre we have:

The Centre Director: Who looks after the day to day running of the centre in all areas.

The Assistant Director & Teacher: Who educates the children, running the Universal Access and supports the Director.

Team Leaders: Team Leaders lead the group of educators in the individual rooms, Programs and Educate children.

Assistant Educators: This includes all other Educating staff whether Full Time, Permanent or Casual, educate the children, program and work in conjunction with the team leader and the director.

Administrative Officer: assists families with accounts and finance reports for the Centre and assists the Centre Director.

Cook: Provides all the meals for the service.

Suggestion Box

The Centre and educators value and appreciate your feedback and suggestions and these are sought through policy review and development, end of term reports, informal gatherings and the annual customer satisfaction survey. In addition, there is a suggestion box located on the wall in the foyer for you to place additional suggestions and ideas. Alternatively, please speak with an educator who will pass your comments onto the Director and other team members.

Centre Newsletters

Every quarter a newsletter will be emailed to your or placed in your pigeon hole and will provide information about what has been happening in the Centre, special visitors and coming events, professional development and training, educator update and changes, policy information and review, parent information, room news, nutrition news and other relevant reminders.

Sun Protection

This Centre is an accredited sun safe centre with the Cancer Council of South Australia. We aim at promoting positive attitudes towards sun safety, through role modelling, education and appropriate behaviours. All educators, children and visitors to the Centre are required to wear appropriate sun safe clothing, a broad brimmed or legionnaires style hat and SPF 30+ sunscreen while outdoors.

What You Need To Bring

Please bring a small bag for your child with at least two full changes of clothes and any security items that your child needs for comfort eg dummy, teddy, blanket etc.

Parents are required to provide nappies for the day and for those children who require breast milk/formula please provide labelled bottles on a daily basis. For children in the Toddlers, Junior Kindy and Preschool rooms a named water bottle is required.

All children are required to bring a broad brimmed or legionnaires style hat for outdoor play.

Please ensure that all items are clearly NAMED for easy return.

Toilet Training

We encourage you to discuss with the educator your child's toilet training. When a child is ready for toilet training, educators will approach the parent/s or the parent/s may approach the educator to implement this training.

Please be aware that clothing can hamper easy access to undressing especially when one is in a hurry. Remember if your child is toilet training to send extra sets of clothing.

Toys from Home

We request that children do not bring toys, books or videos to the Centre. An exception is made for security toys required at sleep time and/or toys etc, brought in for "show & tell" on special days. The Centre will not be responsible for lost or damaged items.

Further Information about the Centre can be obtained by phoning (08) 8362 1843.