

SCHOOLS OUT!

Parent Handbook

Updated  2023



This handbook has been produced to provide Parents/Guardians with information on the Schools Out, Outside School Hours Care Program. We hope your children enjoy attending the program as they participate in a variety of activities and challenges. (For any clarification regarding procedures within this handbook, please refer to the Schools Out OSHC Policy and Procedures Book).

OUR PHILOSOPHY:

Our service aims to provide a program that supports and encourages all children regardless of age, gender, religion, culture and ability. We acknowledge that all children are different, and encourage and celebrate this uniqueness. Our service provides a safe and secure environment in which children may feel confident enough to challenge themselves, to explore and to grow. Our program provides activities and experiences that stimulate children's development, having fun while they learn. Experiences are provided within a flexible environment to allow the participation of all regardless of ability. Those with special needs are welcomed, with opportunities available within all experiences and activities so as encourage full participation. Children will be given choices and encouraged within the process of decision-making. Emphasis will be placed on problem solving skills, along with other life skills that impact greatly upon this age group. Children will be encouraged to respect all others as an important part of their team, staff using team games to further promote this necessary life skill. Our professional, caring staff will provide continuity between home and vacation care making the transition an easier one for both parents and children.

AIMS OF PROGRAM

1. Supporting parents and the local communities.
2. To provide a service while maintaining a high level of care and security.
3. To provide a safe and fun environment for those children requiring supervision whilst parents are at work after school hours. This program is for school aged children of all Back grounds, stages and abilities.
4. To provide a program suitable for all ages and abilities of children attending the program taking into consideration the following guidelines: (a) Safety for the children. (b) Educational benefits for the children. (c) A choice of activities at all times. (d) Introduction to new ideas and expanding social and cognitive skills.
5. To provide a quality program that develops their needs.
6. To provide participants with well-organised skilled and friendly staff.
7. To recognise that every child is a unique individual with particular physical, intellectual, social and emotional potential.

THE PROGRAM

Schools Out, OSHC offers a fun recreational program for children in primary school. There is a range of activities including art and craft, construction, games, music and movement, and technology. The children are encouraged to make suggestions to include in the program and to ask for activities/equipment that might not originally be planned on the day. The program is guided by the My Time, Our Place framework for School Aged Care. The five learning outcomes of My Time, Our Place are:

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

THE NATIONAL QUALITY AGENDA

In 2012 the Licensing and Quality Assurance Systems for Children's Services become integrated and managed at a federal level. This means that all education and care services, including Vacation Care, across Australia will be subject to the same levels for licensing and quality assurance.

The National Quality Standard is a schedule to the National Regulations and sets a new benchmark for the quality of early and middle childhood services. It will also give services and families a better understanding of a quality service and information to compare services more effectively. As this is a new system, it is not possible for all services to be assessed immediately. Macedon Ranges School Holiday Program has not yet been assessed against the National Quality Standards. The Centre has Service Approval from the VIC Department of Education & Training.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Schools Out OSHC program is open during school terms from **7am til 6:00pm** Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays and curriculum days unless otherwise advised).

ARRIVING

When you arrive at the service please ensure your child is signed in. Please inform a staff member your child's arrival. If your child has medication to take during OSHC please refer to the Administration of Medication section of this document.

SIGNING IN

It is a Federal and State Government requirement that your child is signed in and out*
Using your smart phone for the QR code on the parent table at each service. If your child is absent you must mark them absent via the kidsoft app and confirm this the next time you use the QR code to sign your child in or out

ACCESS TO THE SERVICE

Access for families and children to the Schools Out OSHC program will be non-discriminatory. Children's access to safety and care at the service will be ensured, and the custodial rights of parents to access the service will be protected. Other members of the community, professionals and students will be provided access to the service where they can enhance the program's quality, the protection of the welfare and rights of children and staff, or the provision of training and experience to people within the children's services field.

EXCURSIONS

Excursions are an integral part of the children's program at the Schools Out OSHC, these will be developed to provide a broad range of experiences for children. Signed parental permission (available through the Iparent Portal) is necessary for all excursions, which all comply with departmental OSHC Standards. On excursions there will be ratio of 1:8 at all times. The service uses public transport or hire buses supplied by a reputable bus hire company.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Schools Out OSHC has both behaviour management and non-bullying policies (refer to management policies) designed to encourage children to interact in a sociable and safe way towards other children and staff members. We encourage children to be responsible for their own behaviour and to think about why inappropriate behaviour is unacceptable. Any ongoing unacceptable behaviour will be discussed with the parent/guardian. If inappropriate behaviour continues the child may be asked to leave the service.

COMMUNICATION

Communication with families is an important part of our Service Philosophy. Staff are available to speak with you at drop off/pick up times and notices and other information may be emailed to your designated email address.

GOING HOME

When collecting your child please: Complete any paperwork (e.g. Permission Notes, Incident Reports) Sign your child out Inform a staff member you have collected your child and are leaving. We have a duty of care to ensure each child is safe and collected by an authorised person. If you wish for someone other than yourself or a legal guardian to collect your child, a separate authorisation must be completed for each additional person. This includes grandparents, relatives and family friends (even parents with children in the Service). This authorisation is included in the Enrolment Form and can be updated at any time via email or message through the Iparent Portal. If someone besides an authorised person will be collecting your child on a particular day, please ensure a staff member has been notified in writing, including the person's full name as recorded on photo identification and their address. We cannot release a child to someone without permission in writing from the parent. Photo identification will be required from any person collecting your child if they are not known to staff.

Policies Schools Out OSHC Program are committed to providing and maintaining a healthy environment for children and staff at all times. Please see a member of staff if you would like to view any policy or procedure. Below are summaries of essential policies and procedures for keeping children, families and staff healthy.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Nutrition: Children attending Schools Out OSHC will be encouraged to eat food that is nutritious and varied. Breakfast, Afternoon tea, and a late snack is provided for all children attending the program. Healthy eating habits will be encouraged. Children MUST bring a refillable drink bottle every day.

SUN SMART

Children's Services promote a positive attitude towards skin protection and take effective measures to ensure children and staff safety from the effects of the sun. Children are encouraged to apply sunscreen prior to leaving OSHC in the morning and on arrival in the afternoons. Children and staff are required to wear an appropriate hat. As additional protection, children should wear clothing that covers their shoulders. Should your child be allergic to the common brand of sunscreen we ask that you provide a suitable alternative for your child and that the container is clearly labelled with your child's name.

INCIDENTS AND INJURIES

Even in the safest environments incidents and injuries can occur as children explore and enjoy the environment. Should your child sustain an injury whilst at the Schools Out OSHC, an Incident Report will be completed by staff, and a parent or guardian will be asked to sign that they have been made aware of the incident. At times Management may decide to contact you to advise you of an incident involving your child. If you cannot be contacted and your child requires urgent medical attention steps will be taken to ensure the wellbeing of your child.

ALLERGIES

Where a child has a known allergy it should be recorded on the enrolment form and all staff made aware of it. Children who require medication for serious allergies (such as anaphylaxis) will not be accepted for care unless the correct medication is provided to staff. Up to date action plans for medical treatment should also be provided to staff, so that immediate and accurate medical attention can be given.

ADMINISTRATION AND MEDICATION

A separate Medication Administration Form is to be completed for each medication your child requires. All medication must be handed to staff on arrival to be stored in the lockable First Aid Box or the lockable box in the fridge. Medication is not to be left in your child's bag. Completed Medication Administration Forms must be handed to the child's educator on duty in the room. Medication will be administered:

- When a Permission to Administer Medication, Form is completed by an authorised person (i.e. parent, legal guardian, or person nominated by the parent/legal guardian) In an emergency situation as per an approved Medical Action Plan or current First Aid procedures
- All medication must be in the original container, within its use by/expiry date and with the original label attached, in English and legible.
- All prescribed medication, including any herbal/naturopathic medication prescribed by a registered Medical Practitioner, must have a dispensing label that includes the name of the medication, the child's name, date prescribed and dosage. Non-prescription medication will only be administered under the written advice of a registered Medical Practitioner, or verbally in the case of an emergency.
- Staff will administer/apply non-medicated items such as sunscreen, nappy cream, insect repellent if authorisation has been provided by the parent. All non-medicated items must be presented in the original packaging, which must include an expiry date, and will be applied as per the package directions. Paracetamol will be administered if written advice is provided by a registered Medical Practitioner or, in the case of the child having a fever, if the parent has authorised it on the Authorisation Form.
- Where medication is observed by staff as ongoing over a period of time, Management reserves the right to request a letter from a registered medical practitioner to continue to administer the medication to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.

IMMUNISATION

The Centre is required to maintain up to date immunisation records for all children attending Schools Out OSHC. Families are requested to supply proof of immunisation (Immunisation History Statement) upon enrolment and ensure their child's immunisation details remain up to date at all times. We cannot enrol a child unless the parent/guardian has provided documentation that shows the child: Is fully vaccinated for their age, or; Has a medical reason not to be vaccinated, or; Is on the recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind with their vaccinations. In the event of an outbreak of a disease that can be prevented by a vaccine, we are required to notify the Department of Health of the situation. In some cases, unimmunised children may be

required to stay at home for the duration of the outbreak. Please also note that your CCB is linked to your child's immunisation status.

SICKNESS AND CHILD CARE

We ask that if you suspect your child is unwell that you contact the service and advise them of your child's absence due to illness.

The definition of a fever is an armpit (auxiliary) temperature of greater than 38 degrees. Any child with a fever must not be at Schools Out OSHC. If your child presents with any of the symptoms listed below you are required to monitor your child's health for a minimum of 24 hours after the last occurrence of the symptom at home before returning to Schools Out OSHC:

- Vomiting that is persistent – two (2) or more vomits
- Temperature / fever Loose bowel motions/diarrhoea for more than two (2) bowel actions Red, swollen or a discharge in the eyes

In the interests of all children and staff attending Schools Out OSHC, Management reserves the right to send home or refuse attendance to any child that is considered unwell or is showing symptoms of an infection or contagious disease. If you are contacted by staff requesting that you collect your child due to ill health, the request has been made after consideration to the needs of the family, welfare of the child and other children and staff in attendance and in consultation with Management. A clearance from a medical practitioner may be requested for any contagious disease before your child can return to care. It is recommended you obtain a Medical Clearance whenever your child attends a doctor. The clearance should include the name of the child, that they are free of illness and the date they are able to next attend care. Please contact Schools Out OSHC if your child has been exposed to or has a communicable disease. Families are notified of any infectious disease at Schools Out OSHC by the placement of a notice near the sign out area.

We work in partnership with the VICTORIAN Department of Health and seek guidance on exclusion periods from the Federal Governments Staying Healthy in Child Care Guidelines.

Please refer to the School's OUT COVID Action plan for more details.

FEE PAYMENT

Schools Out OSHC is Approved Service so eligible families can claim the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and/or the Child Care Rebate (CCR) either through a fee reduction or by claiming directly through the Family Assistance Office. Fees are payable in advance (as of the January 2017 program). It is at the discretion of the Children's Services Manager to approve any refunds that may be requested. Fees will apply even if your child is unwell and cannot attend on a booked day.

STAFF AS MANDATORY REPORTERS

Under child protection laws of Victoria, all staff employed in early childhood and school aged care services are classified as Mandatory Reporters. This means that staff are required by law to report any situation where a child may be at risk of harm. All staff are trained in child protection and act in the best interests of children at all times. Please refer to our Keeping Children Safe Policy for further information.

FEEDBACK AND GRIEVANCE

We value the opportunity for feedback on the operation of our Schools Out OSCH and this may be provided verbally or in writing at any time. Should you have any concerns regarding the operation of Schools Out OSHC you are encouraged to raise your concerns with the Schools Out OSHC Assistant Coordinators or Manager. The Victorian Department of Education and Training can also be contacted if you feel unsatisfied with any aspect of the service. The Regional Office can be contacted on 1800 619 113.

WHAT TO BRING

Please ensure your child has a hat, and also dressed in weather appropriate clothing. They will store their school bag and all school items in the lockers located under the sign in book.

VALUABLES

While all due care is taken, neither Schools Out OSHC, its supervisors, assistants, or anyone connected with the running of the program cannot be held responsible for loss of money or property. Any valuables brought to the program are at the owner's own risk. All belongings should be clearly labelled with the child's full name.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE CHILDREN

1. Listen to what the staff and leaders are saying.
2. Join in with all the games and activities. You'll have a great time.
3. Stay within the boundaries when we are outside on the grass or on an excursion.
4. Ask a staff member go to the toilet and always take a partner with you.
5. Play sensibly with the other children and take care of the equipment.
6. If you need anything, tell one of the staff leaders - they can always help.
7. Look out for other children. Be kind to each other and work at playing together.
8. Look after your own things- leave your toys and valuables at home.
9. On excursions, stay with the group at all times and be on your best behaviour.
10. Most importantly - HAVE A FUN TIME!!!!

Parents are asked to discuss these Helpful Hints with their children prior to attending the program. We look forward to seeing you at Schools Out OSHC!