



**FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S
SERVICES**

OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE

**FAMILY INFORMATION
HANDBOOK
2005**

WELCOME TO

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CITY OF YARRA

OUR MISSION

TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES
TO PROVIDE INNOVATIVE AND FLEXIBLE
CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY

OUR FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OPERATES:

- 3 After School Care Programs
- 4 Vacation Care Programs
- 4 Childcare Centres and 1 Occasional Care Centre which provides care and education for children between the ages of 0 and 6 years on a part time, full time and occasional basis
- 6 Pre-School Programs (4 stand alone, 2 in Long Day Care)
- 2 Occasional Care services located at the Yarra Leisure Centres
- Family Day Care Program
- Youth Services Program

Assistance is available for parents and staff to facilitate the inclusion of children with additional needs.

For further information about these services please call Family Services ☎9205 5441

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LOCATION OF PROGRAMS

In partnership with our local primary schools the City of Yarra provides the following After School Care programs:

*Children can be collected from some local primary schools by the Council community bus and delivered to these After School programs.
Schools included in the community bus are listed below.*

Atherton Gardens - FAO Service number: 555 007 973V

Supervisor: Tim Vagg

125 Napier Street, Fitzroy

Tel: 9419 3049

Hours of Opening: 3.00pm-6.00pm

Children from the following schools access this program: Fitzroy Primary School and Sacred Heart. Fitzroy children are bused to the program by Council's Community bus. Sacred Heart are collected by staff on foot.

Collingwood College - FAO Service number: 555 007 974S

Supervisor: Margaret Sulikowski

Vere Street, Collingwood

Tel: 9416 2820

Hours of Opening: 3.00pm-6.00pm

Children from the following schools access this program: Collingwood College and St Josephs P.S. St Joseph's children are transported to the program each afternoon by Council's Community bus.

Richmond West Primary School - FAO Service number: 555 008 032L

Supervisor: Angela Kostopoulos

Lennox Street, Richmond

Tel: 9428 7173 or mob. 0412 418 194

Hours of Opening: 3.30pm-6.00pm

Children from the following schools access this program: Richmond West and St Ignatius. Children from St Ignatius are transported to the program each afternoon by Council's Community bus.

All community bus drivers have undertaken a successful National Police Check

SERVICE MISSION

Yarra City Council Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) aims to provide quality care for primary school age children through the provision of enjoyable, appropriate and inclusive activities after school, on curriculum days and during school holidays.

This enables parents to meet their work and/or study commitments without concerns for the safety and well being of their children. Outside School Hours Care also provides respite care for children at risk.

PHILOSOPHY

*We believe that all **children** in OSHC have a right to:*

- safe, secure and caring environments which complement their home, school and community life
- supervision, encouragement and support from professional staff
- programs which support middle childhood development and value play based experiences
- be heard, respected, valued and included
- equity of opportunity
- stimulating, balanced and flexible programs with opportunities for self-directed play
- experiences which enhance independence, self-esteem and confidence
- quality programs which foster creativity, physical development and social skills
- programs and resources which actively promote the acceptance and inclusion of children of diverse ages, abilities, interests, family structures and cultural heritage
- participate in the planning and evaluation of the programs

*We believe that all **parents** with children in OSHC have a right to:*

- responsive services which actively support families' needs
- be welcomed, respected and included
- comprehensive information about the service, the staff and the programs
- feel confident that their children are safe, supervised, happy and involved
- open and respectful interactions with staff and management
- participate in the planning and evaluation of the programs
- timely and equitable responses to issues
- consideration and support for individual family circumstances
- quality services which actively promote the acceptance and inclusion of families of diverse abilities, traditions, structures and cultural heritage

*We believe that all **staff** working in OSHC have a right to:*

- clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- respect and cooperation from children, families, peers and management
- safe, healthy and equitable working environments which support the inclusion of staff of diverse ages, abilities, interests, genders, family structures and cultural heritage
- access quality resources which actively promote inclusion, diversity and equity
- professional support from the staff team and management
- timely and equitable responses to issues
- regular opportunities for professional development
- access to high quality professional resources and programs
- regular performance appraisals and opportunities for feedback to management

OBJECTIVES

We aim to achieve the following:

- to work in partnership with families and the community to provide quality services;
- to provide a caring environment that is accepting of diversity, is complementary to a child's home and school life and creates a sense of freedom, trust and security;
- to respect the family unit by promoting parent participation in the planning development and evaluation of the program;
- to foster the development of each child's self-esteem and pride in her or his cultural heritage;
- to encourage children to be active, enthusiastic and creative explorers of their environment;
- to encourage and support children to express themselves creatively;
- to assist children to become independent, confident and inquisitive learners, considering the needs of the child as an individual and as a member of a group;
- to provide a service that is flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the children and their families;
- to foster non-discriminatory, non-gender biased environments that are inclusive of all children and families;
- to develop and maintain opportunities for the professional and personal development of the staff/care providers;

NATIONAL STANDARDS

The City of Yarra organises and runs Outside School Hours Care programs in accordance with the guidelines of The National Standards for Outside School Hours Care - 1996. A copy is available for reading at the Collingwood Town Hall.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality Assurance was introduced in 2003. The Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS) aims to ensure that children in Outside School Hours Care programs provide high quality care in a stimulating environment that nurtures emotional and intellectual growth with positive experiences and interactions.

For further information please contact the Program Leader at the Collingwood Town Hall on 9205 5479.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS

Any school age child with families working or studying in the municipal district can access our programs on a regular or casual basis.

The City of Yarra Outside School Hours Care programs follow Commonwealth Government guidelines in the allocation of available places to families.

The guidelines state priority as follows:

That where demand exceeds supply places are to allocated as:

First Priority - children at risk of abuse or neglect

Second Priority - families with recognised work or work -related commitments.

Third Priority - other families within Yarra.

Fourth Priority - families from outside Yarra in accordance with Priority of Access guidelines.

A waiting list will be maintained for families who are not initially allocated a place. Subsequent vacancies will also be allocated in accordance with Priority of Access guidelines.

SPECIAL NEEDS SUBSIDY SCHEME

The program may be eligible to receive funds from the Special Needs Subsidy Scheme to support the inclusion of children with additional needs.

For further information concerning the Special Needs Subsidy Scheme please contact the Outside School Hours Care Program Leader on 9205 5479.

FUNDING

The City of Yarra Outside School Hours Care programs are funded by parent fees, Child Care Benefit from the Commonwealth Department of Family & Community Services and a significant contribution from the City of Yarra.

ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

All children must be enrolled to attend the City of Yarra Outside School Hours Care programs. No responsibility will be accepted for unregistered children.

To enrol your child/ren please complete the Enrolment Form and return to the program of your choice, or the Outside School Hours Care Program Leader, at Collingwood Town Hall, 140 Hoddle Street **prior** to the day your child first attends. A Parent Handbook will be issued on enrolment

Casual bookings can only be made where vacancies exist. As we cannot exceed the child/staff ratios, please confirm that a vacancy exists by booking directly with the program supervisor 24 hours before you require the care. Emergency care is only available on a day to day basis.

Please let your child's class teacher and the school office know when your child first attends our programs, giving details of commencement date and days of attendance. It is also important to let the school know if there are any changes to the normal days of attendance or if emergency care is required on any day. We also ask that you contact the Outside School Hours Care Program Leader on 9205 5479.

CONTACT INFORMATION

In the event of an emergency, or if your child becomes unwell at either the After School Care or a Vacation Care program, it is essential that we are kept up to date with the following information:

- Current home address and phone numbers
- Current work address and telephone numbers
- Current addresses and telephone numbers of the **two** people you have nominated as emergency contacts. *Those nominated must be made aware of their responsibility and must be someone other than the child's parent.*

Please notify the program supervisor immediately if there are any changes to this information.

RESIDENCE AND CONTACT (formerly known as Custody and Access)

If a parent is experiencing problems associated with custody and access then please discuss this with the staff. A copy of a current Family Court Order is required on enrolment and we will do our utmost to abide by this. If there is any likelihood of problems associated with the collection of your child, it is the parent's responsibility to advise the staff and to provide information about any change to court orders.

CANCELLATIONS

In the interest of the safety of all children attending the program, please contact the program supervisor or the Outside School Hours Care Program Leader on 9205 5479 before 12.00pm if your child is not attending on any booked day. This is particularly important if your child is accessing the bus service.

FEES

City of Yarra Outside School Hours Care programs have the following fee structure

<u>Program</u>	<u>Cost Per Child Per Day</u>
Atherton Gardens	\$9.00
Richmond West Primary	\$9.00
Collingwood College	\$9.00
Casual Bookings	\$11.00
Curriculum Days (all programs)	\$27.00

CHILDCARE BENEFIT

All programs offer Child Care Benefit from the Commonwealth Department of Family & Community Services to eligible families.

Families must register with the Family Assistance Office (Centrelink - 13 61 50) and will then receive an Income Assessment Notice and a reduction in the cost of care.

Child Care Benefit is available to all families who are Australian residents, based on assessment of income.

Application forms for Child Care Benefit are available at Family Assistance Offices, and from Family Services at Collingwood Town Hall.

Families eligible for Child Care Benefit will be charged full fees until the program receives a current Assessment Notice.

Please note,

- There is an additional \$1.00 per child per day applies for all casual bookings.
- Child Care Benefit is not available for any late fees incurred.
- Fees will be charged for cancellations of bookings unless a medical certificate is provided
- Fees will not be charged where a minimum of one weeks notice is given for a period of absence.

FEE PAYMENTS

Fees are to be paid weekly, one week in advance.

Fees for casual bookings are to be paid on the day care is used.

Permanent bookings are classified as regular booked days on which your child attends.

Casual bookings are classified as 'one-off' bookings, where care is only required on an irregular basis ie: in the case of unforeseen circumstances or appointments.

Fees are paid to the program supervisor, preferably on Thursday or Friday, on a weekly basis. Alternatively payment may be made at the Collingwood Town Hall by cash, cheques, EFTpos or Credit Card. At the programs cheques are the preferred method of payment. (Cheques are to be made payable to the City of Yarra). If paying at the program please ensure you complete the Payment Sheet.

Fees are required for **all** booked days. Payment must be made if your child does not attend on a regular-booked day. Fees are required to be paid if your child goes on holidays during school term and is absent from the program unless one week's notice in writing is given or a medical certificate provided.

If you cease to require After School Care please notify the program supervisor **in writing**. Failure to do so may result in the continued charging of fees for booked days.

LATE PICK UPS

Closing time is 6.00pm for all programs. Please arrive prior to this time if you wish to discuss your child's day and to allow enough time to gather your child's belongings and sign out.

In an emergency all parents are asked to:

- **telephone if you are unable to collect your child by closing time.**
- **keep all emergency contact numbers up to date.**

If children are not collected by 6.00pm, a late fee of **\$1.00 per minute** will be charged.

If a child is still at a program after 6.00pm every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian and/or emergency contacts.

Late pick-ups are stressful for all children. If parents are consistently late they will be asked to find alternative care for their children.

If a child has not been collected from a program:

- At closing time, staff will contact the parents or emergency contact people listed.
- At 6.30 pm, if there has been no response from any of the above, staff will contact the City of Yarra Children's Services for advice and further action to take.
- At 7.00 pm if the child is still at the program, the police may be contacted to ascertain whether the parent or guardian may have been in an accident, or they may visit the child's residential address.
- If after four hours the child has not been collected, staff will contact the Department of Human Services After Hours Child Protection Service for advice and further action.

PUPIL FREE DAYS

Full day care may be available on pupil free days if sufficient numbers of children are booked in to attend. Local schools are encouraged to liaise when planning pupil free days to ensure maximum bookings for the programs. Contact your program supervisor for more information.

STAFFING

The City of Yarra Outside School Hours Care programs employ people from a wide range of backgrounds.

All staff have experience and/or qualifications in working with children aged 5-12 years. An adequate staff/child ratio is essential in providing good quality care. Each program has sufficient staff to meet the National Standards for Outside School Hours Care, as follows:

- **one staff member for every 15 children in the program.**
- **one staff member for every 8 children on excursions.**
- **one staff member for every 5 children for swimming.**

Please contact the individual program for a list of current staff members.

RELIEF STAFF

You may notice that from time to time staff members caring for your child may be away and relief staff will be with your child. We believe that continuity of care is important for children, therefore every endeavour is made to use the same relief staff so that the children know them.

Relief staff are employed when staff are absent for the following reasons:

- sickness
- training
- annual or study leave

PROGRAM INFORMATION

In every program our most important goal is to provide a warm and friendly environment where children can enjoy a wide variety of supervised play and recreational activities. As all children have different needs, activities are planned according to their interests. Children are encouraged to help in planning their program, which includes varied arts and craft activities, adventurous and challenging play, cooking, games and sport, drama, excursions, etc., or just having fun with other children.

Play is vital to a child's growth and development. Our programs aim to guide children to relate more effectively with others, to develop a sense of responsibility towards people and property, to be resourceful in their use of materials, to be an effective and contributing member of a group and to make creative and worthwhile use of their time. Through play, children learn about themselves, how to get along with other people and are able to practise a range of skills.

A program plan, providing information on the daily activities, is displayed at every program.

A nutritious and varied afternoon snack is provided each day. If your child has particular dietary needs please inform the program staff of the child's requirements.

Please take the opportunity to discuss your child's activities with the program supervisor. Ongoing communication between parents and staff is most helpful and always encouraged.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

Acceptable standards of behaviour need to be maintained to ensure the physical and emotional health of all children and staff in the program and to ensure the service is able to meet its objectives without undue disruption.

In accordance with National Standards, appropriate standards of discipline are maintained using positive guidance directed towards acceptable behaviour.

Children are encouraged to understand and participate in the development of the program's code of behaviour, including the design of positive behaviour strategies and strategies for unacceptable behaviour.

As much as possible, we aim for consistency between behaviour guidance policies within the Outside School Hours Care program and schools.

The safety and well being of all children and staff attending the program is a high priority. Unacceptable behaviour, which endangers the safety or well being of staff or children, may warrant exclusion from the program.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

In order to protect the health of both children and staff, all programs observe the guidelines produced by the Victorian Department of Human Services for exclusion of children with particular infectious diseases. A current exclusion list is attached as appendix 1

ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS

If your child becomes ill or suffers an accident whilst attending a Outside School Hours Care program every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian or emergency contacts as soon as possible.

All programs have staff who possess a current First Aid qualification and a first aid kit is maintained at all programs.

An ill or injured child will be kept under staff supervision until the parent/guardian/emergency contact arrives. If immediate medical aid or hospitalisation is required; staff will initiate the process and make every effort to notify the parent/guardian or emergency contact.

An accident report is to be completed by staff. Parents will be asked to sign the report.

- Parents / Guardians are responsible for all medical costs incurred to the child / children, including ambulance, as stated on the enrolment form.

MEDICATION

Medication can only be administered to a child in the following circumstances:

- medication is current, in the original container and prescribed for the particular child
- the child's parent/guardian provides written consent in the medication book
- staff complete all relevant details in the medication book
- in an emergency, when a child's parent/guardian/emergency contact are unable to be contacted, if permission is given by a medical practitioner.

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency evacuation procedures in the case of fire, etc. are displayed at each program. Staff are trained to deal with such emergencies and at regular intervals Evacuation Drills are practised with the children. Fire extinguishers are located at the programs. Parents will be notified in advance of planned Evacuation Drills.

SIGNING IN AND OUT

All children will be signed into the program by the After School Care staff. Parents are required to sign out their children on collection with the actual time of departure recorded by the parent/guardian. In the case of an emergency this daily attendance record is vital information. Daily attendance records are also required for Child Care Benefit purposes and used to verify attendance. Children can only be collected and signed out by an authorised adult nominated on the enrolment form.

Children leaving the program unaccompanied must have written permission from the parent / guardian.

SUNSMART POLICY

All programs encourage the observance of a Sunsmart policy that requires children to bring hats and sunscreen to each session during Terms 1 and 4. Children are encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities. Staff are expected to model appropriate behaviour by wearing hats when outdoors and applying sunscreen.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

In order to ensure our programs are responsive to the needs and desires of parents we encourage parents to visit programs whenever this is convenient. Program supervisors are available to discuss any information parents may require or may wish to pass on to the program concerning their child. Ideas or suggestions for the program are always welcome.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Should you have any concerns regarding the program, please discuss these concerns with the program supervisor.

All concerns will be taken very seriously.

- If you do not feel they are being addressed satisfactorily you may contact the Outside School Hours Care Program Leader for the City of Yarra; on 9205 5479
- If you are still not satisfied you may contact the Coordinator Children's Services, City of Yarra on 9205 5478.

The main switchboard number is 9205 5555.

PARENT AGREEMENT

I/ we _____ ,

- Have read and understood the policies and procedures as stated in the handbook.
- I agree to abide by these policies as a condition of enrolment in Outside School Hours Care.
- I agree to pay my childcare fees in advance, according to City of Yarra policy.
- I understand that fees are charged at the normal rate when my child is absent, unless one weeks notice in writing is given or a medical certificate is supplied.
- I agree to give two weeks' notice in writing when reducing or cancelling my After School Care booking. In the absence of two weeks' written notice fees will still apply.

Information Privacy

- I give my consent to display my child's food allergy information to enable staff to provide for my child's care and safety needs. yes no
- I give my consent for my child's medication details to be recorded in the communal medication book to enable staff to provide for my child's medical needs. yes no
- I give my consent for details about my child's day to be recorded in communication books. yes no
- I give my consent for my child's photo to be taken and I understand that I will be informed if it will be used in brochures for the program. yes no
- **I understand this means other families may see information relating to my child**

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____

Please detach page and return to program supervisor.