

POLICY STATEMENT ON ACCESS TO THE SERVICE

Access for families and children to the St Pius X Out of School Hours Care Service will be on a non-discriminatory basis. 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 in the children's services field.

HOW POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED (specific policies and procedures)

- Equal Opportunity principles will be observed in relation to access to the service for children, families and staff (See Equal Opportunity Policy, Staff Recruitment and Induction Policy).
- Families from schools other than St Pius X are welcome to enrol their children in the service if:
 - There are enough places in the service
 - All fees are regularly paid on time by the family
 - The children display acceptable behaviour at all times

Enrolments

- Enrolments will be accepted according to the Australian Government 'Priority of Access' Guidelines. An enrolment form must be completed for each child. When a parent is not fluent in English, the service will endeavour, wherever possible, to seek the assistance of an interpreter. On enrolment, parents will be given a 'Family Information booklet', advising how to access the service's full range of policies and asked to complete the Enrolment Form.
- If a place is not immediately available at the service, the child may be put on a waiting list. Details about priority of access eligibility, and care requirements will be required. Once on the waiting list, the family is asked to contact the service regularly to confirm they wish to remain on the list. When a place becomes available, the family will be contacted by the director and enrolment may proceed.
- Enrolment information will be updated regularly or when a family's circumstances change, to ensure information is current and correct. The Service will also have access to the school's general database contact info in case of emergency. Enrolment information will be kept in a confidential file. Access to this information is available only to the director, OSHC staff and Aust Govt Officers. It is the responsibility of a parent to notify the service of any changes to family circumstances.
- Committee members' or volunteers children may be cared for by the service with no fee payable/reduced fee if the committee member/volunteer is engaged on committee business, for the duration of that business only. Placement is to be organised through the director and the children must be included in the children : staff ratios.
- Children of staff members (both school and OSHC staff) must be enrolled in the program and counted in the regular children:staff ratios. A staff discount is applied if the staff member is working for the school at the time. Discount is applied **before** CCB is subtracted and is just over 50% of the full fee before CCB is applied.
- Suspension or exclusion of children from the service will occur only after all other avenues of communication and support have been exhausted and when:
 - professional advice confirms a child is in psychological danger as a result of an unusually prolonged inability to settle into care, or

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- a child puts one or more children or staff at risk through inappropriate/dangerous behaviour (see Behaviour Management policy)
- (see also Health policy for exclusion relating to infectious disease)
- (see also Debt Management policy, which outlines procedures when fees are not paid).
- (see also below under Late Collection)

Children referred from school

- Children not collected from school by 3.30pm will be directed to the OSHC service by school personnel. The custodial parent will then be liable for any fees incurred. Sometimes school sport practises may be cancelled at short notice and these children will be cared for by OSHC for short periods (until the parent can be notified) at no cost, unless the children normally come to OSHC when not at sport practise.

Authorisation for collecting children

- The names and contact numbers of all people authorised to collect children from the service must be included on the enrolment form. Any changes to these must be advised by the family as soon as possible.
- If the custodial parent/guardian or authorised person arranges for an unauthorised person to collect their child from the service, they must contact the service to advise of this arrangement and confirm who will collect the child.
- If the service has not been notified and someone other than the family/authorised person arrives to collect the child, the OSHC staff will contact the family to get their authorisation. Wherever possible, prior notification should be provided by the parent. The child will not be released until the families authorisation has been obtained. If that authorised person is not known to the service, the family may be asked to provide a description of the person concerned, who may also be required to provide proof of their identity. (Older children may also be used to confirm identity.)

Late collection

- Parents who are unavoidably detained and unable to collect their child at the collection time must telephone the service to advise of their lateness and expected time of arrival. If a parent is unable to collect their child before closing time, they should arrange for another responsible adult to collect the child and advise the service of this arrangement, if other than an authorised person on the enrolment form.
- If the parent has not contacted the service and the child has not been collected by closing time, the service will attempt to telephone the parent or, if this is not possible, telephone the emergency contact people listed on the child's enrolment form to arrange for the child's immediate collection (see Fees policy).
- If no-one can be contacted and the child has not been collected 30 minutes after the service's normal closing time, the principal will be contacted and options will be considered including contacting police. A notice about this will be posted on the Activity Room doors with the relevant telephone contact numbers.
- Regular late collection of children from the service is not acceptable. If a family is late collecting their children in excess of 3 times in one calendar year it will be referred to the principal and management with the possibility of the enrolment being cancelled. Any extenuating circumstances will be considered.

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Family contact

- Staff will communicate with families in a positive and supportive manner which encourages the parent/child relationship and the parent/educator relationship. Information about family issues and personal lives will be handled confidentially. Every effort will be made to treat both parents equally.
- Parents may have access to the director at any reasonable time, (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 6pm) to discuss any concerns regarding their child. This may be on the spot, or by telephone or by appointment. Staff will not discuss with parents confidential information regarding any other child or family within the service.
- Parents may visit the service at any reasonable time while their child is in care.
- Where a child attending the service is not living with both parents, or where disputes arise or have arisen about the responsibility of the child, the following will apply:
 - Parent responsibility remains with both parents jointly and individually except where it is altered by a Parent Order.
 - A Parent Order may determine where the child will reside (Residence Order), which parent will have contact with the child and how this contact will happen (Contact Order), which parent has maintenance liabilities for the child (Maintenance Order) and which specific aspects of parental responsibility are given to one parent (Specific Issues Order).
 - Where a non-enrolling parent cites a Parent Order giving himself or herself lawful access to the child, the Parent Order needs to be produced for inspection by the director. The enrolling parent will be telephoned, to both check the existence of the Parent Order and to be informed about the situation.
- The child will only be released into the care of the parent with Parental Responsibility.
 - (See Harassment Policy)
- In the case of a parent arriving at the service in a visibly intoxicated or otherwise unfit state to drive, to collect a child, the person will be encouraged to contact another adult to drive them and the child home or the service will offer to call a taxi. If the unfit person insists on taking the child, the police may be informed.
- Where human life is at risk despite staff efforts, the police will be immediately informed.

Volunteers, students and visitors

- Volunteers may be accepted for work experience where there is evidence of a genuine interest in the work. Potential volunteers will be interviewed by the director or management committee representative to determine their suitability. All volunteers will be given clear guidelines in relation to their responsibilities and code of conduct while at the service. Volunteers will need to undergo Police screening procedures, which are conducted by the Catholic Education Office and include a reference from someone in the community.
 - The service will offer student placements to:
 - high school students who wish to gain work experience as part of their school program, if the school has initiated the placement and the students are studying early childhood, family or community studies.
 - students attending child care, teacher, recreation, community or early childhood training with a registered training organisation.

- All placements will be negotiated through the director and principal. Students will be provided with clear guidelines in relation to their responsibilities and conduct while at the service
- Volunteers and students are supplementary to staff requirements and will not be used to replace absent staff unless they are on the service's payroll as relief staff.
- Visitors may be invited into the service as part of the children's program. They could include: local people with a skill, art or experience from which the children will gain experience or enjoyment; members of the Fire Brigade, Police Department, or a medical or nursing profession. Catholic Education policies will be followed relating to Child Protection and police clearances.
- All other visitors to the service must make an appointment with the director.
- Any unwelcome visitor/person will be calmly asked to leave the service. Refusal to leave will necessitate the director calling the police for their removal. Staff will not at any time try to physically remove an unwelcome person.
- Professional access to the service will be at the discretion of the director/school principal. If it involves the children, the parent's written consent will be required. The only exception to this would be for children at risk (see Child Protection policy).
- Professionals or officials who may require access include:
 - union representatives; who have the right to access workplaces for the purposes of investigating whether industrial awards or agreements are being complied with. Such rights are usually found in the award or industrial agreement that applies to that workplace
 - Families SA - Children's Protection Act 1993 (SA)
 - police officers
 - WHS inspectors – Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)
 - Department of Education or Centrelink officers - to inspect service records.
 - Food Safety Inspectors from Port Adelaide Enfield Council
 - Assessors from the Education Standards Board under Education and Care Services National Regulations

Hours of operation

- Before school care
 - The service is open from 7.15am to 8.30 am, Monday to Friday except school holidays and public holidays.
- After school care
 - The service is open from 3pm to 6.15 pm. Monday to Friday except school holidays and Public Holidays.
- Vacation care
 - The service is open from 7.30am to 6 pm. Monday to Friday except public holidays.
- School pupil-free days the service will be open from 7.15am to 6.15pm.