



South Turrumurra Out of School Hours Care

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A guide to life at OOSH

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The Mission

Our mission is to provide a high standard of care, both before and after school hours, for children who attend Turrumurra public School, whose parents or carers have a need for out of hours care.

This care is provided in a safe, secure and homely environment where children have access to, and are encouraged to participate in, a range of age appropriate recreational and educational activities.

The Philosophy

We will;

- Provide access to all children with respect to diversity and without bias to culture, religion, sex, disability or income.
- Encourage partnerships and participation of parents/guardians and children in the planning of programs to ensure the Centre meets the changing needs of our community.
- Encourage continuous improvement of the Centre's environment through reflective practice, organisation and team work.
- Provide activities that are socially, physically, creatively and intellectually stimulating which support ongoing learning.
- Implement a program which establishes clear goals and high expectations and ensures all children are encouraged to participate whilst maintaining their independence.
- Embrace a tolerant, understanding, nurturing, trusting and inclusive value system with secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships where all children and families are treated equitably.

About OOSH

We are a separately incorporated association run by a volunteer committee made up from the parents of OOSH. First established in 1990, we now employ four permanent and seven casual staff; and are licensed for 120 children in the mornings and afternoons.

Though we are separately incorporated from the school, we are still located within school grounds and are easily recognisable by our rainbow fence along our balcony. The centre itself consists of four rooms all within the one building and interconnected through internal doorways. We maintain our own bathroom (more commonly known as the Cow Shed due to its decorations) and kitchen where we prepare afternoon tea and get messy in cooking activities with the children.

Our operating hours are:

7:00am – 9:10am

And

3:10 – 6:15pm

And you can contact us on:

Telephone: 02 9144 4769

Fax: 02 9144 7949

Email;

Questions - ooshfaqs@yahoo.com

Absences – ooshabsences@yahoo.com

Waitlist and Enrolment

If you are reading this, then chances are you have already experienced our Waitlist system. Though it is a long process, it is the fairest means we have to ensure that all families have equal access to before and after school care.

Very briefly; our waitlist system is based on the date you provide your application. Offers are sent out via email as places become available – this can sometimes take a matter of weeks/months as children are allocated their days and times of extracurricular activities.

Positions are offered in the below order;

Permanent Places: These are given out when positions are permanently given up by another child e.g. year six children leaving the school. These are generally all filled up by mid Term One.

Guaranteed Places: *In the first 4 weeks of Term 1 and the last 4 weeks of Term 4, any permanent places may be put on hold for 12 months (\$20 administration fee). After the 12 months, you will be allocated these places back again.*

Temporary Places: These positions are “on loan” to your child/ren for the remainder of the year and are offered to families when the permanent positions are all full (see guaranteed places above). However, it should be noted that there is **NO CERTAINTY** that you will automatically obtain a permanent position for this same position the following year. At the end of that year, you will go back on to the waitlist based on the original date of application on your waitlist form.

Casual Places: Casual places are available to all families enrolled in the centre, be your places permanent or temporary, however they come at a higher price (please see Fees and Billing). These places can be requested days/weeks in advance, or hours in the case of an emergency and will be accommodated as long as we have a place available in that given session.

Casual ENROLMENT: This is a particular form of enrolment that allows children to be formally registered with the centre but only attend on a casual basis

when required. These enrolments have a two week processing period before casual places can even be requested – and all fees, including casual rates, are the same as the normal enrolment (see fees and Billing). Don't forget that these places are only provided should we have a vacancy that session!

When you enrol....

Upon being offered a Permanent or Temporary place - alongside your "letter of offer" will come a weighty document which is our Enrolment Form (we are separate from the school, so can't use your school forms!) This will provide us with all the information we could possibly need about your child/ren's needs and desires plus some extras that the Regulatory Authorities require us to have on site. This document isn't to be taken lightly though - if all aspects aren't fully completed then your child/ren will be unable to attend OOSH until it's revised and finalised.

Some important requirements of enrolment:

- Your family and child/ren **MUST** be registered with the Family Assistance Office and you must provide the relevant CRN details.
- We have to have a hard copy of each child's Immunisation Record – we are more than happy to photo copy your blue books for you 😊
- **Please** supply us with at least two emergency contacts – things get messy when we have no one to call in these rare circumstances.
- If you state that your child has any allergies or medical conditions, you must provide us with a medical management plan or risk minimisation plan which is supplied by your doctor. A hand written note is not enough information for us and is not sufficient by law.

REMEMBER YOUR ENROLMENT FORM IS A LEGAL DOCUMENT AND IS KEPT FOR 3 YEARS AFTER YOUR CHILD'S LAST ATTENDANCE. BEFORE YOU SIGN EACH SECTION, PLEASE ENSURE YOU READ ALL THE CONTENT THOROUGHLY.

Our Program

Alongside the weighty documents of the National Education and Care Services Regulations and Laws, our centre program is intrinsically linked with the School Aged Care Learning Framework: My Time Our Place.

This Framework aims to extend and enrich children's wellbeing and development in school age care settings. It acknowledges that children need a place to engage in a range of play and leisure experiences that allow them to feel happy, safe and relaxed. It also recognises that they need time to interact with friends, practice social skills, solve problems, try new activities and learn life skills.

Our program compliments the children's learning at home and at school. At OOSH we place great importance on relationships and nurturing children's talents and interests.

Through the Framework's five learning goals our staff will assist your child to develop;

- A strong sense of their identity
- Connections with their world
- A strong sense of wellbeing
- Confidence and involvement in their learning and
- Effective communication skills.

You will find our Daily Program written up on a white board to the right hand side of the signing in and out desk.

Our Staff

All our wonderful staff at the centre are employed based on their experience, training and their capabilities and professional conduct shown through formal interview processes. We all have a passion for children and are dedicated to ensuring that every child's time at the centre is safe, stimulating and fun.

Staff hold the important role of being Mandatory Reporters for Child Protection which means they are required by law to inform the relevant agencies should they have a suspicion that a child is in significant risk of harm. We do not take this position lightly here at OOSH and all staff are fully trained in this area.

Please feel free to read our staff blurbs which are located just inside the entrance way to OOSH.

Our Committee

South Turrumurra OOSH is managed by a volunteer committee which is made up of devoted parents who use the Centre and are elected annually at the AGM.

The Committee meets at least once per term in the OOSH rooms and is responsible for all legal and financial matters related to the Centre. Every parent using the Centre is invited to attend the committee meetings - dates and times are posted around the centre and in the school newsletter the week prior to the meeting as subtle reminders.

Our committee meetings are always friendly and we love fresh faces and ideas to participate when possible so keep an eye out for the dates each term!

Our Daily Routine

Morning (7:00am to 9:30am)

At 7am our bright and cheery staff will open the doors of OOSH and begin the day. Breakfast is served from 7am to 7:30am for those who want it – this includes toast (with a choice of vegemite, strawberry jam, honey or plain) and a cup of juice to wash it down.

Our mornings at OOSH are generally a more ‘relaxed’ free play experience. Craft is available each morning, but is set up at around 7:30am. We do *special* cooking two or three times a week after breakfast is finished, and this is normally something like sausages, pancakes or muffins etc.

If the weather is nice – children also have the option of playing outside.

At 8:35am we play the Popcorn Song by the Muppets which is signal for the children to pack away the things they have been playing with and come and sit down for roll call. As their names are called, children in Primary are allowed to leave the OOSH rooms and go play with their peers in the playground, but Infants children stay seated before being walked down to their classrooms by 2 staff members.

Staff are on site until 9:30am to tidy the centre and prepare for the afternoon session. This is a great time for you as parents to come and speak with us should you need to 😊

Afternoon (2:30pm to 6:15pm)

Staff are on site at 2:30pm to prepare the afternoon tea for the children and select any equipment needed for that days program – this is another good time for parents to come and speak with staff before the bell at 3:05pm.

KINDIES!

OOSH is fully aware that the new kindergarten children finish early at 2:30pm for the first few weeks – please be assured that a staff member WILL be there to collect your child should they be attending OOSH that afternoon and every

afternoon for their first year. *To avoid incurring a \$30 'finding fee' please make sure that you advise OOSH if your child/ren are going to be absent for an afternoon session (ooshabsences@yahoo.com). As you could appreciate, we don't enjoy the stress of having to look for missing children who unbeknownst to OOSH, have gone home safely with their parents, when we also have 100+ other children arriving at the centre.*

All children are marked off a check list as they arrive at the centre to hang their things on a hook. After they have had a drink (juice and water provided) children go and sit in their year groups in the afternoon area until everyone is accounted for. Kindergarten children are helped to put their yellow visible bibs on before all the children are sent year by year to line up for soap and washing hands at the toilets (all supervised by staff).

Afternoon tea is held just outside the centre and children sit in their year groups so they mingle with their friends – this is important for kindergarten children as it allows them to develop friendships with children outside of their class. We have afternoon tea monitors (generally not kindergarten until Term 3), one of which is a “sign monitor” who selects when each grade walks up the veranda to collect their food (Our Weekly Menu is pinned up each week on the blind opposite the main door to OOSH. *Please advise us if your child has any special dietary requirements and we will accommodate for these. For information on what food we serve, please ask OOSH staff for a printout of our rotating menu.*

From 4pm till 5:30pm, children can either head down to the oval or inside – children are not required to stay in any location but must ask permission from staff to move between the outside and inside environments; Outside: Group game, free play with a wide range of equipment, Sports Program if running that day (please see staff for information) and hall games if needed (e.g. bad weather, winter evenings). Inside (until 6pm): Homework, quiet play – board games etc, craft, cooking and 4th room when staffing allows.

From 6pm children are required to pack up any remaining toys and find a quiet activity to complete alone or with a friend as staff begin to close the centre for the day and evaluate that afternoons program.

All children must be collected from the centre by 6:15pm otherwise a late collection fee will be incurred.

Signing In and Signing Out

Please be advised that children are not to be left at the centre at any time prior to the 7.00am opening hours of the centre.

On arrival the person bringing the child is responsible to sign the child in on the sign-in sheet next to the child's name, indicating time of arrival. The Centre will not be responsible or liable for any injuries which may occur where a child has not been properly signed in.

In the afternoons, children must be collected by the 6.15pm closing time of the centre by an Authorised Person.

An authorised person includes;

- A Parent or legal guardian (In accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulation 99 (5) "Parent" does not include a parent who is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child.)
- The authorised nominees (over the age of 16) listed on the child's enrolment form as an emergency contact
- A person (over the age of 16) granted written authorisation by a Parents and/or Authorised Person.

Again, the authorised person who is collecting the child must sign the sign-out sheet next to the child's name, indicating time of departure.

Opposite the main door as you enter is a black panel which has all the children's names that are attending OOSH that afternoon. Each child is expected to remove their own name from the board when they are collected and is an important habit that requires some parent reminders initially! The reason for this board is to actively involve children with the signing out process and it also provides an easy and quick visual for staff of who is still at OOSH at any given time.

Fees and Billing

New Families

A non-refundable registration fee of \$30 payable per family is due upon enrolment with the centre, along with a \$20 maintenance fee annually.

A refundable bond of \$100 per family is also set to cover the late or under payment of fees by some families. This is refunded once the final payment of fees has been made when a family leaves the service

OOSH Fees

Morning - \$10

Casual - \$15

Afternoon - \$20

Casual - \$25

Paying Your Fees

Fees will be invoiced once fortnightly in arrears. This billing cycle allows families who receive the child care rebate fortnightly to be offset against full fees on each invoice, leaving only the balance to pay.

Fees are payable within 14 days from date of invoice. Invoices will be emailed to parents. It is therefore important for parents/carers to provide email details on the enrolment documentation. Where email is not available to a family please discuss alternative arrangements with the Centre Coordinator.

Fees are to be paid for the days the child is booked into the centre, including times when the child is absent due to illness or holidays. CCR and CCB will be applied for absent days; however families only have forty two days allowable absences per session per financial year per child. Families will receive not CCMS discount if they have reached the forty two days on any further absences thereafter for that child within that financial year.

Cancelling Care

A Cancellation Form (available at the centre) is to be given to the Coordinator for any cancellation of care. There is to be two weeks notice of any cancellations and if no notice is given, fees are to be paid.

Parent Entitlements for Fee Assistance.

The centre is approved to offer Child Care Management System rebates (CCMS) to eligible families. The instructions in the Handbook provided by the Department of Family and Community Services should be followed. Parents and carers should receive all necessary documents and be informed of how to make their application to the Family Assistance Office (FAO).

Families will not be formally enrolled in the centre unless the families CRN details are provided.

Change to Parental Circumstances:

Due to OOSH fees being issued fortnightly in arrears to ONE nominated parent, alternating weekly attendance, week on/week off changes to permanent positions, or split bills cannot occur. Where the child/ren hold permanent positions at the centre but do not attend on a regular or week on/week off basis, standard absences will be incurred.

Overdue Fees.

Parents may raise any concerns that they have in paying fees, with the Coordinator, Administrator and/or Committee as appropriate, prior to the due date. If no previous arrangements have been made regarding overdue fees, the centre will:

After 2 weeks overdue: Send an overdue account reminder to your email, including a copy of your account and a \$50 late fee is added to this amount.

After 4 weeks overdue: Send a standard reminder letter stating that the child/ren's place/s will be cancelled commencing the following week if payment is not received within the next five working days.

5 weeks overdue: If no arrangements have been made to pay the fees or the agreement made has not been kept, the child/ren's place/s are cancelled and reapplication can be undertaken via the waitlist.

Late Fees

Any Parent and/or Authorised Person who collects their child/ren after 6.15pm without prior mutual agreement with the centre's coordinator, will be charged a late fee of \$1 per minute per child for the first 10 minutes, and then \$2 a minute per child for every minute thereafter until the child/ren are collected. Normal overdue fee procedure will apply.

If a Parent and/or Authorised Person fails to collect their child/ren by 6.30pm three times or more within a 12 month period, the child's place in the centre may be cancelled.

Finding Fee:

If a child is absent or missing (see Absent and Missing Children policy) and the Parent and/or Authorised person has failed to notify the Centre of that child's planned absence then a finding fee of \$30 will be charged. Normal overdue fee procedure will apply.

Communication, Grievances and Complaints

At OOSH we pride ourselves on being friendly, homely and flexible to meet the needs of not only the children, but the families using our service. The coordinator and other staff are always be able to make time to talk with both your children and yourselves whether it be to ask how your day has been, inform you of your child's time in our care, or to assist you with something you need from us.

Should the subject you wish to communicate be of a sensitive nature, the coordinator is easily able to discuss matters immediately in a private area or schedule an appointment at another date outside of operating hours.

Please be advised that it is not appropriate to broach sensitive subjects with the casual staff of the centre, and anything that needs to be restated regarding the issue; will be done by the coordinator or management committee.

Important notices regarding the centre's programming, planning or changes to the service will be published in the school newsletter and on the parent notice board (located directly opposite the OOSH entrance on the café blind). If an event or change to the centre requires more detailed or specific information to be delivered to every family, we will also give notes to the children to be sent home.

Complaints or Grievances Policy Notes

We will support parents' right to complain and will help them to make their complaints clear and try to resolve them.

A complaint can be informal or formal. It can be anything which a parent thinks is unfair or which makes them unhappy with the service.

If the complaint is not handled to the parent's satisfaction at this level they should discuss the issue with a member of the Committee, either in writing or verbally. Contact details of committee members will be available on the parent notice board.

The committee will discuss the issue with the Coordinator and develop a strategy for resolving the problem, this would be discussed further with the parent or if necessary a meeting will be organised with the Coordinator and parent to resolve the problem.

The parent's complaint is to be recorded and dated indicating the issue of concern and how it was resolved.

The Coordinator or committee will inform the parent of what has been decided regarding the issue. Staff will also be informed of any relevant issues that they need to address or be aware.

This could be done verbally or if the issue has been dealt with on a more formal basis then the committee or Coordinator will write personally to the parent.

If any complaint cannot be resolved internally to the parent's satisfaction, external options will be offered such as an unbiased third party. E.g. Department of Education and Care Services, Section of the Ombudsman (Complaints unit).