Policy Manual 2004

Please note that this is a working document as at 14/9/04. FACS requirements are being added on a weekly basis. If a more up-to-date version is required, please contact a committee member.

1. Philosophy of the Service

The Kialla West Primary School Council believes that every family has the right to quality care that recognises and values the child as an individual and is responsive to the needs of families.

The setting therefore needs to be a warm, secure, caring environment where the development of independence and self-confidence is fostered, and creativity and individuality are encouraged. The partnership between parent and carer is invaluable in the care and outcome for the child.

Our program is flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the children and their families and is provided in a way that recognizes and is supportive to each family's values and cultural and religious needs.

2. Goals of the Service

The program aims to provide:
- a safe, warm and caring atmosphere for children
- stimulating and interesting activities
- a wide variety of activities to cater for the needs of individual children
- warm and friendly relationships, with staff, children and parents

3. Administration

- Priority of access

The OSHC Program is required to follow the Commonwealth Government's Priority of Access guidelines. Places shall be allocated according to the following:

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

Within these main categories priority should also be given to children:
- in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- in families which include a disabled person
- in families on lower incomes
- in socially isolated families
- of single parents.
School children shall also be given priority over those children who have not yet commenced school. Kialla West Primary School children shall also be given priority over children attending other primary schools.

Where there are no vacant places, a child placed under a lower priority may be required to alter their booking to provide a place for a higher priority child eg. Priority 1. This may involve reducing the hours/days of care or shifting the day of care, or utilising casual bookings only. Families will receive 2 weeks notice should this have to happen.

### Confidentiality of records/information

1. Attendance records must be kept, listing the name (including surname), time of arrival and time of departure of each child. The person dropping off and picking the child up must sign both places where applicable. (See Delivery and Collection Policy).

2. Accident, injury, illness or medication records must be kept listing:
   - Accidents or injuries received by a child or any illness which becomes apparent while attending the Centre.
   - All action undertaken by staff in relation to the accident, injury, illness or medication
   - Parent/Guardian’s signature.
   - Date and time.

The above records are to be held until child is twenty four (24) years.

3. Enrolment records will be reviewed on an annual basis and records will be destroyed if a child has not attended for a period of one year.

4. Developmental Records will be given to parent/guardian in person when staff are notified of a child leaving the service. No records will be posted. If parent/guardians are unable to collect records in person, those records will be destroyed after the child has not attended the service for one year.

5. Childcare Benefit (CCB) notices and all relevant documentation eg. parent statements, records for allowable absences etc. are required to be kept for a period of 3 years as per the requirements of the Family Assistance Office.

6. Program Plans are advised to be kept for up to 2 years, therefore enabling assessment for Accreditation purposes.

7. All records will be stored in a secure, lockable place.

8. Records will only be available to:
   - Parents (those pertaining to their own child)
   - Child Protection / Department of Human Services
   - Police
   - Solicitors and/or Court upon issue of subpoena of records.

9. Disposal/destruction of records will be in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Public Records Act 1973.

### Review of policy
This Policy document will be reviewed annually, with the fee structure being reviewed twice in that time.

- **Waiting List**

  1. Where a vacancy is unavailable, parents shall be asked to complete a "Waiting List" form (Appendix 1) to place their child on the waiting list.
  2. Parents are to receive a letter confirming that their child is on the waiting list and that the parent will be contacted should a vacancy become available.
  3. Waiting lists shall be reviewed on a regular basis. Parents shall be contacted requesting that they confirm that care is still required.
  4. When a vacancy occurs in a Program a place will be offered to the first child on the Waiting List according to:
     - The date of application when the “Request for Care” form was submitted
     - Priority of access guidelines
     - Whether the child is already attending the Program
     - Whether the child has a sibling already attending the Program.

- **Participation and Access**

  - All children will have equal opportunity to access the after school care or vacation care service.
  - Staff will offer programs which are based on individual and group needs, and in consideration of gender equity, cultural background, social needs and/or disability.
  - Staff will encourage input and participation by all parents/families to ensure equal access for all children.
  - Staff will encourage the participation of parents/guardians to monitor their child's progress and develop strategies for the child on a continuing basis.
  - Where additional support/funding is required to ensure access to childcare, every effort will be made to seek such support/funding prior to the child commencing care.

4. **Facilities and Equipment**

- **Space Requirements**

  - The program will be based within the school buildings and grounds.
  - The indoor space available for the program is the library and computer facility, a space in excess of 50m$^2$.
  - The outdoor space available for the program includes the quiet area outside the library, the sealed area adjacent to the library and the school ovals, a space in excess of 1.5 ha.
  - The verandah area adjacent to the library is suitable for outdoor activities in hotter weather.
  - The co-ordinator will have access to other school facilities, such as phone, sports equipment and television.
  - Children who are not attending the program who are in the school grounds will be excluded from the areas required for those attending the program.

- **Toilets and Hand Basins**

  - OSHC children and staff have safe access to toilets and hand-washing facilities. These are adjacent to, and visible from within, the library.
• The toilets are sufficient in number to cater for the total school population, and provide separate toilets for girls and boys.

• Provision of children’s equipment

• A range of equipment is available to ensure that the developmental needs of the children in care can be properly met and facilitate a balanced learning program including the development of the children’s fine and gross motor skills and social interactions.
• Provision of equipment is based on programming to meet the outside school hours developmental needs of children.
• As well as equipment purchased specifically for the program, the co-ordinator has access to school classroom equipment and sports equipment.

5. Health and Safety

• Infectious diseases

The infectious diseases exclusion times will be the same as that set out by the Department of Education for school children. The following information sets out the times of exclusion from school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Pox</td>
<td>Until fully recovered. Some remaining scabs are not an indication for continued exclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>For at least seven days from the appearance of the rash, or until medical certificate of recovery is produced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Measles</td>
<td>Until fully recovered and at least 4 days from the onset of the rash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis</td>
<td>Until a medical certificate of recovery is produced, or on subsidence of symptoms, but not before seven days after onset of jaundice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Sores</td>
<td>Until sores have fully healed. The child may be allowed to return, provided that appropriate treatment is being applied and that sores on exposed surfaces such as scalp, face, hands and legs are covered with occlusive dressings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumps</td>
<td>Until fully recovered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scabies</td>
<td>Until appropriate treatment has commenced, supported when requested, by a medical certificate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Lice</td>
<td>Exclusion from school for children with head lice is usually reserved for any child who has not been treated after a second notification, whose condition is still active despite treatment, or any child suspected of having an infestation for whom the parents have refused inspection by an authorised Officer. The Head of a school has the right to exclude a child and the parents can be required to produce a medical certificate stating that the appropriate treatment has commenced before the child can return to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ringworm</td>
<td>Until appropriate treatment has commenced, supported when requested, by a medical certificate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whooping Cough</td>
<td>For four weeks, or until a medical certificate of recovery is produced.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Telephone Facilities
The school telephone system is available for use by program staff. A cordless telephone is placed in the library so that the staff may take it outside during outdoor activities.

- **Birds and animals**

1. All animals in the program (whether visiting or permanent) will be kept clean and healthy with regular worming and vaccination where appropriate.
2. Staff must ensure that play areas within the program are free from animal hair.
3. Animals must be kept in a separate area from children, whether inside or in the yard. A protected run, whether inside or out, must be maintained to securely separate the animal and the children. All fencing must restrict penetration by small fingers.
4. Any direct contact with animals must be closely supervised by the staff and be under their control eg, holding rabbit or guinea pig etc.
5. Staff are to ensure that children wash their hands thoroughly after touching the animals. On the occasion that animals are in the room, staff also must ensure that tables are disinfected before any food is served.
6. Staff must ensure that garden areas, including sandpit, are kept free from animal excrement.
7. Staff must ensure that animal food, bowls and litter trays etc. are inaccessible to children and are kept in a hygienic condition.
8. Birdcages are not to be kept in food preparation areas. Feathers, droppings and seeds are to be cleared away at regular intervals. Cages are not to be cleaned while children are in the program and should be wet down before cleaning.

- **Smoke free environment**

  Government Regulations prohibit smoking within the school grounds and school buildings. Parents have been informed of this.

- **Sun Smart**

  In line with the School's Sunsmart Policy, the OSHC Program requires all children to wear broad rimmed hats during Term 1 and 4 when outside. Sunscreen is provided for all students.

- **Transport**

  Operating as a single staff model means that the children will not be leaving the premises on excursions.

- **First aid**

  - **Qualifications**
    - The Co-ordinator will have Level 2 First Aid qualification.
    - Relief staff will only be used if they have a current first aid certificate.

- **Family Law**

  1. Staff will undertake training (as available and appropriate) for high risk situations.
2. Parents/Guardians are required to inform the centre of any orders under the Family Law Act, in relation to children attending the program.

3. Parents/Guardians must provide the program with a current copy of orders, to ensure that the staff can legally abide by these orders.

4. Parents/Guardians should provide a list of people who are allowed contact with the child.

5. Parents/Guardians should inform the program immediately they believe a court order may be violated.

6. If a person not entitled under any Family Law Act Orders arrives to collect the child (and the staff have a copy of the order), he/she will advise the person that they have a legal obligation to refuse to hand over the child to that person.

7. If that person insists on taking the child, the staff member should:
   - Discourage the person and explain the program's policy and legal obligations.
   - Refer the person to other programs for advice if appropriate.
   - Make every effort to contact the police for attendance before the child is removed.
   - If the person is still insistent on removing the child and the staff consider that their safety and/or the safety of children are at risk:
     - The staff should allow the child to depart with that person.
     - Telephone the police and the parent who has parental responsibility immediately or any emergency contacts if parent is unavailable.
     - Record full details of the person, incident, including a description of any vehicle used, registration number of the vehicle, etc.
     - Notify the Program Committee or Principal with all relevant details as soon as circumstances allow.

In extreme circumstances staff may need to consider emergency procedures such as those for evacuation/hostage situations etc. (see Emergency Procedures Policy).

6. Programming

- Excursions

As this program is funded as a single staff model, there will be no excursions undertaken away from the school as part of program activities.

- Behaviour Support for children

1. The School Conduct Code remains in force during the time of the program.

2. Occasionally it may be necessary to instantly remove a child from the program session where the child:
   - behaves in such a way as to constitute a danger to the physical and emotional health of any staff member or other child;
   - consistently and deliberately fails to do as they are asked by a staff member; and/or
   - is in such a condition as to constitute a health risk to any staff member or other child.

In such instances the parents or emergency contact will be contacted to immediately collect the child.

3. Where, over a period of time, a child’s behaviour warrants special attention, the co-ordinator, in consultation with the principal, shall ensure that consultative, problem solving measures designed to improve the behaviour are put in place. The parents and the child (where appropriate) will be given the opportunity to meet with the principal and the co-ordinator and will be consulted from the outset. This consultation process and the measures decided upon will be allowed to operate over an appropriate and reasonable period of time.
4. Where these measures have not improved the situation, the principal will advise the School Council president of the situation. The principal will convene a meeting of the co-ordinator, the child’s parents and the child (if appropriate). The parents may also invite a person of their choice to support them. The School Council president, or his/her nominee, may also attend the meeting. The meeting will consider:
   • the child’s behaviour;
   • the strategies being implemented by the program staff to encourage the child to improve his/her behaviour;
   • the possibility of exclusion should the behaviour continue; and
   • what alternative child care arrangements can be made.
This consultation process and the strategies decided upon will also be allowed to operate over an appropriate and reasonable period of time.

5. If these strategies fail to achieve an acceptable change in behaviour, and the principal, in consultation with the co-ordinator, believes that the child should be excluded from the program, normal school procedures should be followed.

7. Finance

- Fee structure

   See attached sheet for details

- Budget

   • The program will endeavour to operate on a break-even basis.
   • The program staff will be paid at the appropriate rate as specified by the DE&T.
   • The fee structure will be reviewed regularly and provided to parents using the program.

- Fee collection

   1. OSHCP fees are set by the School Council and reviewed twice yearly.
   2. Payment for childcare will be fortnightly in arrears. Accounts with details of the amount owing will be available at the Program. Parents/guardians will be given clear information on how and where payments can be made.
   3. Fees are required to be paid within 14 days of issue of statement.
   4. Parents/guardians are encouraged to inform the Program Committee, School Bursar or Principal of problems they are encountering with the payment of fees. The above will endeavor to establish a suitable arrangement for payment of fees.
   5. The Committee retains the right to withdraw the child/ren from the program if the account remains unpaid.
   6. All debtors exceeding 14 days will be given a verbal and/or written reminder that payment is required immediately. The Co-ordinator shall attach a reminder (sticker/notice) and re-issue statement immediately.
   7. If a debtor cannot make a payment, but is willing to develop a payment schedule that is acceptable to the Program Committee, then the matter will go no further.
   8. If no payment is received or arrangements are not made within a further 7 days (21 days from issue of initial invoice), a letter shall be issued stating amount owing and the date payment is due.
   9. If no payment is received or arrangements are not made within a further 7 days (28 days from issue of initial invoice), a letter shall be issued stating amount owing. The letter shall also state
that care shall be ceased in 7 days (effective from the date of the letter) should payment not be received by a specified date.

10. If payment is not received care shall cease. Once care has ceased the debt amount must be paid in full before care can re-commence.

11. In the instance where payment is made by cheque, and the cheque has been dishonored, parents are required to pay all costs associated with this process.

- **Fee receipting**

  - The family assistance legislation requires that all services issue receipts.
  - Receipts will meet accountability requirements if they contain the following information:
    - name of the service (and Australian Business Number [ABN] if applicable)
    - receipt number or unique identifier
    - date the payment was made
    - name of the person who paid
    - names of the children covered by the receipt
    - period to which the fee relates
    - amount of CCB deducted for the period covered by the receipt
    - amount paid (do not include CCB in this amount)
    - signature of the person issuing the receipt.
  - Services do not have to issue receipts for child at risk cases.
  - Receipts may also contain a statement of the number of allowable absences used to date in the current financial year.

- **Definition of casual and permanent bookings**

  Permanent Bookings: A permanent booking is an ongoing position kept available in the program, and must be paid for even if the child is absent.

  Casual Bookings: Casual bookings are for positions made available on a daily basis and are subject to availability

- **Fee for late pick-ups**

  A penalty fee will apply if children are not collected by 6:00pm. This fee is detailed in the Fees and Charges Schedule.

- **Absences**

  Allowable and Approved Absences
  
  - Allowable and approved absences only relate to situations where a child is absent and is charged for a booking eg. permanent booking or where a child does not arrive for a casual booking. These are based on the Commonwealth’s Guidelines for CCB (Childcare Benefit).
  
  - Parents are granted 30 **allowable absences** per child per financial year. Therefore their child can be absent for any reason on 30 occasions. Once a parent exceeds 30 allowable absences they will be charged a full fee (with no CCB deducted) for any further absences in that financial year (unless it is deemed an Approved absence).
  
  - A parent can nominate their child’s absence as an “**approved absence**” should they meet the appropriate criteria eg. child/parent/sibling is sick and a medical certificate is provided, an RDO, rotating shift work. Approved absences are unlimited.
• Childcare Benefit

- Information about the Federal Government Childcare Benefit Scheme is available from the Family Assistance Office.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that a Childcare Benefit application is lodged within 7 days of the commencement of care. Failure to do so will result in the full fee being charged from the date of care commencing.
- It is the family responsibility to ensure their Childcare Benefit information is current with the Family Assistance Office.

The CRN for this program is 407 127 182K.

8. Operating Hours

• Hours of the program

- The program will run Monday to Friday from 3.30pm till 6.00pm. The children will be supplied with afternoon tea in the first hour of care.
- On the last day of the school term, the program will run between 2.30pm and 6.00pm.
- The program will not run during school holidays.

• Pupil Free Days

In the instance of a Pupil Free Day, the program will run if numbers are viable and the venue is available. There will be a notice requesting expressions of interest in the school newsletter for 3 weeks prior to the curriculum day. If there is sufficient interest the program will go ahead.

- The program will run from 8.00am till 6.00pm.
- The cost will be based on an hourly rate with a minimum booking of 3 hours, with the charge rounded up to the next full hour.
- Children will bring their own lunch and snacks.

Refer to the current scale of fees and charges for the hourly rate.

• Staff Ratios

As this program is running as a single staff model:
- The ratio will be 1 member of staff to 15 children, with a maximum of 15 children present at any one time.
- No excursions are to be undertaken, all activities are school based.
- An additional staff member may be called in if deemed necessary.

• Delivery and Collection of Children

1. Parents will provide the Program with a list of persons authorised to deliver and/or collect their child and will inform the staff of any changes to this list. Initially this notification will be made on the Program Enrolment Form. Refer also to 'Custody / Court Orders' policy.
2. OSHCP Staff / parent / guardian will write the exact time of arrival and departure and sign the Attendance Sheet each day.
3. Parents will notify staff of any change to the normal collection arrangements for their child by:
   • verbal notification
   • a phone call from a nominated authorised person.

4. No child will be allowed to leave the Program unless collected by an authorized person.

5. Parents shall make contact with a staff member upon arrival and prior to departure to ensure staff are aware of a child’s arrival and departure and to allow for exchange of any relevant information.

6. Persons bringing or collecting a child (other than the parents/guardian of the child) must be 18 years or over unless written permission (verbal permission is not acceptable) is given for a person of 16 or 17 years of age.

7. If the authorised person is unable to collect a child then the Program is to be contacted by an authorised person and given details of the person collecting the child. The latter person must provide proof of identity. Staff members are to record any phone authorisation with time and date.

8. If an unauthorized person delivers or comes to collect a child, the OSHCP staff member will ring parent/guardian for authorisation. The staff member is to record phone authorisation with time and date.

9. In the instance of a child leaving the Program temporarily for another activity, they are to be signed out and in again by an authorized person as per the procedure outlined above.

**Strategies for late or non collection of children**

No child is to remain in the program after 6:00pm. If parents suspect that they will be late, they must contact one of the approved, alternate people nominated on their child’s enrolment form and have them collect their child before 6:00pm.

When a child is left in the program after 6:00pm, the coordinator will take the following action:
   • ring parents/guardians
   • ring emergency contacts.

If no contact can be made to either of the above, then a member of the OSHC Committee shall be notified to attend the OSHC Program.

If contact cannot be made to parents/guardians or emergency contacts after 1 hour of closure, police shall be called. A notice shall be left on the door of the school notifying where the child has been taken and/or who the parent needs to contact.

If late pick-ups become a regular occurrence, the child(ren)’s place in the program will be reviewed.

The Sub-Committee will bill parents for all expenses involved.

**Procedure to advise of a child’s absence when a child is booked/expected**

In the instance of a child’s absence the school needs to be contacted by the parent / guardian. This will be recorded on the delivery and collection form.

If the child is expected in the program and hasn’t arrived, the staff member will contact the school office by phone and a staff member will ascertain the child’s whereabouts.

**9. Reporting of Child Abuse / Child Protection**
**Protective Care**

1. Staff will familiarize themselves with the aspects of reporting child abuse, as published by Child Protection Victoria.
2. Staff will document observations, including date and time, in regard to any suspected child abuse incidents.
3. Staff will notify the principal and/or Child Protection Victoria if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that any child has been abused: physically, sexually, emotionally, or suffering neglect.
   The following information will be disclosed:
   - The child's name, age and address
   - Reasons of suspecting abuse
   - Assessment of immediate danger to the child
   - Description of any injury or behaviour observed
   - Current whereabouts of the child (if known)
   - Any other relevant information about the child or family
4. The Principal or senior member of the teaching staff must be notified of any contact with Child Protection Victoria.

   Contact number for notification is:
   **Child Protection**
   **Department of Human Services**
   **Wangaratta**
   **Phone: 1800 650 227**

6. Where Child Protection has requested to interview the child at the program, the staff member shall immediately contact the Principal or senior teaching staff member for guidance.

To consult about possible abuse and report when necessary is the responsibility of every professional. Legal protection (Children and Young Persons Act, 1989) is provided to those who report abuse to the authorities on the basis of reasonable concern. A professional who makes a notification with the best interests of the child in mind is protected from any legal action for defamation. A notification of suspected child abuse does not constitute a breach of professional ethics.

10. **Parents/Guardians/Approved persons**

    **Access and participation of parents or guardians or approved person**

    Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in the program by:
    - providing feedback on their child's involvement
    - commenting on the program and providing suggestions
    - contributing materials eg craft, junk/recyclable materials etc.
    - becoming actively involved on the Sub-Committee
    - attending Sub-Committee meetings
    - having access to the program at all times.

    **Grievance Procedures/Complaints**
Parents should direct any concerns that they have regarding the Outside School Hours Care Program to:
- the Program Co-ordinator in the first instance,
- if the concern is unresolved then to the Program Sub-Committee,
- if there is still no resolution, then to the Principal.

Parents should note that as the Program is run separately to the school program, they need to direct concerns to the above, and not the classroom teachers.

- **Custody/Court Orders**

Parents

All parents have powers and responsibilities in relation to their children, which can only be challenged by a court order. The Children's Services Regulations 1998 refer to these powers and responsibilities as "lawful authority." Lawful authority is not affected by the relationship between the parents, such as whether or not they have lived together or are married. A court order, such as under the Family Law Act, may take away the authority of a parent to do something or may give it to another person.

Guardians

A guardian of a child also has lawful authority. A legal guardian is given lawful authority by a court order. The definition of "guardian" under the Children's Services Act 1996 also covers situations where a child does not live with his or her parents and there are no court orders. In these cases the guardian is the person the child lives with who has day to day care and control of the child.

**COURT ORDERS RELATING TO THE CHILD**

Parents should notify the program if there are any court orders regarding the powers and responsibilities of the parents in relation to the child or access to the child. If there are any such orders, they should bring the original court order/s for staff to see and a copy to attach to the enrolment form. Parents should also notify the program if these orders:

a) change the powers of a parent/guardian to:
   - authorise the taking of the child outside the service by a staff member of the service
   - consent to the medical treatment of the child
   - request or permit the administration of medication to the child
   - collect the child AND/OR
b) give these powers to someone else,

11. **Staffing**

- **Qualifications**

  - All staff will have qualifications/experience as appropriate.
  - All staff will have a current Police Check.
  - The Co-ordinator will have Level 2 First Aid qualification.
  - Relief staff will only be used if they have a current first aid certificate.
  - The staff will carry out the duties as detailed in the relevant position description.

- **Job descriptions**
See separate sheets for details

- **Grievance resolution**

  Staff should direct any concerns that they have regarding the operation of the Outside School Hours Care Program, or Committee decisions, to:
  - a member of the Program Sub-Committee,
  - if the matter is still unresolved, they should put their concerns in writing to the Program Sub-Committee,
  - if the matter remains unresolved, they should put their concerns in writing to the School Council.