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**NORTHCOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS  
CARE**

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**JANUARY 2009**

This booklet provides a general introduction to the Northcote Primary School/Camp Australia Out of School Hours Care Program, its philosophy, aims and the way it operates.

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The service is based at:

Northcote Primary School's (NPS) Out of School Hours Care Program  
42-44 Henry Street,  
Northcote, 3070  
Telephone: 9489 0347  
Emergency phone (morning) St Joseph's Primary School 9481 7166

The program for the children operates from:

7.30 a.m. to 8.45 a.m. (Before School Care), and  
3.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. (After School Care)  
7.30am to 6.00pm. (Curriculum days NPS only)

## **1.1 PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

The Northcote Primary School Out of School Hours Program aims to provide a warm and caring environment for the children from Northcote Primary and St. Joseph's School which recognises the value of play and the importance of middle childhood. We aim to meet the needs of the children as individuals, and to be supportive of parents by meeting the variety of diverse needs they bring to the service.

## **1.2 OBJECTIVES**

"Northcote Primary School and St. Joseph's Primary School believe education should be enjoyable for children. Relationships between the children and staff, and between staff and the community, should maintain a warm personal and friendly atmosphere"

**The objectives of the Out of School Hours Care Program are:**

- To offer a quality service that is flexible and responsive to community needs, and is supportive of families from our schools.
- To provide a service that is affordable to families.
- To create an environment that reflects the diverse social and cultural backgrounds of our society
- To encourage the development of children's independence, self esteem and life skills.

- To provide opportunities to meet children's individual needs and be responsive to the interests of children and their diverse backgrounds.
- To promote non-discriminatory behaviour by providing a non-biased program based on inclusive practices.
- To assist in achieving the above objective, the allocation of places will be made with reference to the guidelines and priorities established by the Department of Family and Community Services as follows:
  - Priority 1. A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
  - Priority 2. A child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the Family Assistance Act.
  - Priority 3. Any other child.
- To involve the users of the Program in managing and assisting by offering membership on the Management Committee.

## 2. **MANAGEMENT OF THE PROGRAM**

The Northcote Primary School Council has established the Out of School Hours Committee (the Management Committee), as a School Council sub-committee, to oversee and manage the program. The Management Committee has contracted Camp Australia to staff the program.

### The Management Committee members:

- NP School Liaison/Secretary
- Service Co-Ordinator (Camp Australia)
- St Joseph's School Liaison
- Financial Administrator (NPS)

### The Management Committee membership is made up as follows:

1. At least one member of NP School Council.
2. At least one member of St Joseph's Primary School either a parent or administrative officer.
3. Other members, up to five, to be parents of children who use the program.
4. The administrator of the program.

The Committee meets twice a school term and reports back to Northcote Primary School Council. The committee welcomes new members and any suggestions that you feel may be of benefit to the program.

Committee members can be contacted through the Co Ordinator if you have enquires after hours, or a note can be left at the Out of School Hours house or the school office.

### **3. FACILITIES**

Programs and activities are supervised at the House or Northcote Primary School's grounds.

### **4. HEALTH & SAFETY**

#### **4.1 Infectious Diseases**

Policy is guided by the School exclusion table from the Department of Human Services and displayed at the House.

#### **4.2 Illness & Accidents**

Most staff are qualified Work Place Level 2 First Aider's. It is a requirement under the National Standards for OSHC to have a First Aider rostered on during opening hours of operating. The Out of School Hours Program follows the School procedures in that the Co Ordinator, after discussion with staff fill in the accident report forms that are signed by the parents. These forms detail the illness and first aid applied. The forms are retained at the Out of School Hours house until the child is 24 years old.

#### **4.3 Equity Policies**

The Out of School Hours Staff will actively implement Equal Opportunities guidelines and all children, families and staff will be treated equally, regardless of gender, race, religion or disability. Children are encouraged to work cooperatively and to participate equally in all planned activities.

#### **4.4 Emergency Procedures**

Fire Drills are held regularly, for users of both the Before School Care and After School Care Programs, as the Program constantly has new enrolments. Emergency procedures and Evacuation Plans are displayed at the Out of School Hours House.

#### **4.5 Food**

Snacks are offered at Before School Care and After School Care. The policy of the Program is to offer healthy snacks within a budget. They are not intended to replace meals, with the exception of the Before School Care "Breakfast Club". The weekly menu is displayed at the house and we welcome comments and suggestions from children and families.

#### **4.6 Clothing**

Hats need to be supplied for your child/children. The children and staff are required to wear their hats outdoors in terms 1 and 4 in line with the school's Sunsmart Policy. If students are without hats, they will be asked to stay in the shade.

Children are encouraged to wear appropriate clothing during summer and winter and bring or use their own sunscreen. Inappropriate clothing can cause serious harm to your child.

### **5. STAFF**

Staffing ratios comply with those outlined in the "Guidelines for National Standards for Outside School Hours Care", 2003-2004, Department of Human Services. The ratio is 15 children to 1 staff member.

## **6. SERVICE PROCEDURES**

### **6.1 About the program**

The program is broad and comprehensive. It is relevant to the children's physical (gross and fine motor), intellectual, social and emotional needs. All activities are age appropriate. The Program provides a range of opportunities for both individual and group play

(active and passive). The Program has planned activities to challenge and promote the children's self esteem, sense of self worth, values, dignity and encourage imagination, resourcefulness and creativity. We welcome comments and suggestions on programming from children and families.

**A typical week may include:**

Art & Craft: plaster masks, painting, hama beads, chalk and charcoal drawings, peg people, box construction, collages, cotton friendship bands, paper mobiles, wood constructions and clay plaques;

Sports & Games: basketball, rounders, soccer, cricket, football, skipping, chasey, hide-and-seeK and board games;

Reading & Writing: homework, projects, reading and writing, books, songs, poetry, stories and plays;

Computers & Technology: playing on computers, construction equipment and kites; plus activities of a technological nature.

Music & Drama: listening to the radio and children's tapes, dancing, puppet shows, dress-ups, drama games, performing plays, sand play, cubby play and poetry readings;

Cooking & Gardening: baking snacks, making playdough, planting flowers and bulbs.

**6.2 Hours of Operation, Enrolment & Procedures for Collection of Children**

Before School Care:

- Hours of operation: 7.30 a.m. to 8.45 a.m.
- Staff attend the program until 9.00 a.m.

After School Care:

- Hours of operation: 3.30 to 6.00 p.m.
- Staff attend the program from 3:00 to 6.15 p.m.

Curriculum Days (NPS):

- Hours of operation: 7.30am to 6.00pm
- Staff attend the program from 7.30am to 6.15 p.m.

All attempts are made to co-ordinate the Curriculum days for both schools to fall on the same days, as it is not financially viable to run the program for St Josephs children alone.

Children attending After School Care, are required to arrive at the house before 3.40 p.m. Please note that this guideline is to ensure that children move between the school and the house as quickly as possible, so that their whereabouts is known. Preps are escorted over to the house by a care worker, who collects each prep child from their classroom. It would help if you discuss this matter with your child to help him/her understand its importance. The Co-ordinator will ring all families of children who have been booked in to attend the service and do not arrive.

**THESE PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY NPS COUNCIL IN MAY 2007.**

### **Enrolment/Booking Procedure**

Booking forms are available from the program house. Complete all sections of the Booking and Medical Information forms, making sure you sign the Parent /guardian declaration form.

Parents must enrol their child/children providing emergency contact numbers and medical information as on the "Confidential Update".

It is a parent responsibility to keep the service informed of changes of address, phone numbers and emergency contacts.

Emergency arrangements (i.e. attending on a day when you are not booked), can be made by contacting the Co Ordinator on 9489 0347 between 7.30 a.m. and 9.00 a.m. or 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. to find out whether a place is available for your child.

A message can be left on the answering machine and a staff member will contact you to advise of the availability of a place. Children are not to attend the Program without prior arrangements by parents.

Similarly, parents should advise staff if children are **not** attending the Program on a day that they are booked, so that a staff member is aware not to expect these children.

## **Bookings for Following Year**

The first day of children attending school is the first day of the program operating.

## **Curriculum Days**

Writing a child's name on the booking sheet for a Northcote Primary School Curriculum Day, is a commitment to payment for that day. Cancellations will be accepted up to three working days before the Curriculum Day. If a child is not pre-booked, parents may phone the house to see if a place is available, but this is not guaranteed.

If you have booked in for all day care on a Curriculum Day, it will be assumed that your Before School Care and After School Care requirements will be the same as usual unless you alter your booking. If you do not book in for all day care, it will be assumed that you will not require Before School Care or After School Care for that day (Helen St. students). For St. Joseph's students, it will be assumed that your requirements are as usual, unless you alter your booking.

Please remember that your child must be signed in and out (including times) on Curriculum Days.

These policies are necessary to plan for staff members on these days, and have been designed to simplify procedures as much as possible.

## **Picking Up Children**

The OOSH Policy is as follows:

"Parents and designated adults or responsible persons are to sign their child/children out on arrival, whereby the child/children revert to the parent's care."

To assist the staff, we would appreciate you taking your child/children home without undue delay.

## **Signing In/Out Book**

The Signing In/Out Book must be signed when you drop off/pick up your child/children from the Program. This includes Curriculum Days. The child's name, time and a signature of the parent/guardian is essential.

Children will not be permitted to sign themselves in/out and must stay at the Program until collected by a nominated person.

If your child/children is leaving either from school or the Program with another family, the Program staff needs written permission from you, the parent.

## **6.3 Behaviour Management**

The behaviour management strategies of the program are in line with the Northcote Primary School Student Code of Conduct and Camp Australia Behaviour Management policy. A full copy of these are available from the house.

Children are made aware of the rules and are expected to comply with them. Please note that the program is offered as an extra curricular service and therefore the consequence of breaking the rules can be exclusion from the program.

Steps followed are:

1. 1<sup>st</sup> warning
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> warning
3. Consequences
  - time out from activity
  - yard clean up
  - miss out on activity
4. If the behaviour is repeated then time out from the program is considered.

## **6.4 Handling of Complaints**

If you have any complaints related to Out of School Hours Care, please firstly direct them to the Co-ordinator, who will refer them to the Committee of Management if they cannot be resolved to your

satisfaction. Please feel free to send these in writing to the Out of School Hours Management Committee.

## 6.5 Parental Access

Any special custody arrangements including court orders must be presented as an updated legal document and provide a copy to the service.

## 7. FEE STRUCTURE

No. of Children:	Before School Care	After School Care	Curriculum day
	Flat Rate	Flat Rate	Flat Rate
1 Child (daily)	Permanent \$10.50 Casual \$12.60	Permanent \$15.75 Casual \$18.90	\$42.00
2 Children (daily)	Permanent \$21.00 Casual \$25.20	Permanent \$31.50 Casual \$37.80	\$84.00

Childcare Benefit is available to all families regardless of your income. Please speak to the Co Ordinator for further information.

### PERMANENT CARE

Permanent space will be available as a permanent booking where a set day and time is guaranteed to parents for the month and continuing period ahead.

Permanent bookings are binding for the active month and can only be changed at the end of each month for the month ahead.

All **permanent** bookings are to be invoiced ahead at the start of each month and payable by halfway through the active month.

### CASUAL CARE

Casual places are NOT guaranteed and are only available if vacancies exist.

All **casual** bookings are binding and will be invoiced at the end of each week and are payable by the next week.

You will receive an invoice by mail and payment is due back at your school office by the due date stated on the account

**CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED AT THE HOUSE FOR SECURITY REASONS!**

Any payment not received in time to be processed, will incur an administration fee of \$5.00.

In the case of continued non-payment of fees, after 3 reminder letters from the Management Committee, children will be excluded from the Program until overdue fees have been paid. If experiencing financial hardship, please contact the school principal on 9481 0009. Parents are reminded to pay fees each fortnight.

If you have any queries regarding your accounts, the correct procedure is as follows:

- If the actual booked days are in question, speak to the Out Of School Hours Program Co Ordinator
- If your account is the issue, direct the inquiry to the Out of School Hours Financial Administrator, Colleen Romeril. She is available at the House each Tuesday between 10.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. If you phone, and receive the answering machine, please leave a message. Colleen Romeril will return your call.
- If the inquiry still remains unresolved, please direct the issue, in writing, to the Out of School Hours Management Committee.

**Childcare Benefit (CCB)**

Fees paid for Out of School Hours Care, are eligible for Childcare Benefit. Each family that uses the service is eligible for Childcare Benefit, even if the Benefit may be the minimum rate, you are still able to receive the Benefit.

### Allowable Absences

CCB is paid for up to 30 allowable absence days for each child per financial year across all approved Outside School Hours care services. This is when your child does not attend but you are still charged and pay for the care.

### Approved Absences

CCB is payable for absences taken for the following reasons:

- Illness (with a medical certificate)
- Non-immunisation
- Rostered days off
- Rotating shift work
- Temporary closure of a school or pupil free day
- Public holidays
- Periods of local emergency
- Court ordered shared custody

For further information, including Application Forms, please contact the Out of School Hours Program on 9489 0347, or the Family Assistance Office on 136150.

### **Late Fees and late pick up of children**

The After School Care Program runs between 3.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. Children must be picked up by 6.00 p.m. If you are going to be late, please notify the Out of School Hours Program staff, and use your emergency contact/s to make arrangements to pick up your child/children.

A late fine of \$1 per minute is payable if you pick up your child after 6.00 p.m. Please note that the program is closed after 6.15pm, after which the co-ordinator is legally obliged to take your child/ren to the nearest police station (Northcote).

If you wish to raise any issues relating to fees, it is your responsibility to contact the Management Committee.