

# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR THE OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE SERVICE 2014**

- **Who is responsible for looking after our children while we work before and after school? The school? OSHC?**

Families have always been responsible for looking after their children after school or around their work commitments. The OSHC Service is a childcare service, run by school council, but is not a given 'right', although, it was originally set up to provide for a need within the community for childcare at the time (@1989), however, that need has extensively increased as the school has grown. Like all other Childcare Services, places are capped, guided and governed by extensive law and regulations, including;

- Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations.
- Children's Services Act
- Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004
- Privacy Act
- Information privacy Act 2000
- Working with Children Act
- Food Safety Act 1984
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Disability Act 2006
- Dept of Education and Early Childhood Development Policy
- Dept. of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Policy

- **Can we extend the OSHC Service to cater for the growing needs of the school? (Can the OSHC Service take more children than 80 a day? why can't you employ more staff? Use the artroom? The library?, etc)**

No, as discussed at the beginning of 2012, a document; *OSHC Growth Limitations & Impact for 2013* was presented to school council, to answer many questions that were being asked at the time, as the service was experiencing for the first time booked out days for the Aftercare service. This document outlined how and why the growth of the Service would have limitations and potential negative impact on all stakeholders.

- Indoor & Outdoor space requirements; 3.25 sq mtr per child of unencumbered space indoors; 7.25 sq mtrs outside.(legal requirement)
- Shared spaces with teachers
- Storage of resources
- Staff crisis/employment of qualified staff (legal requirement)
- Law and Regulation – compliance vs non-compliance>fines
- Currently, we cannot extend the service beyond 80 children maximum capacity per day in both the Aftercare and Beforecare programs.
- The service is already utilizing all available areas; the Artroom, hall & library, and entire external grounds

➤ Employing more staff will not resolve the space issue.

- **Can we extend the OSHC program in the future?**

This decision will need to be addressed by School Council, and will be contingent on the Schools Strategic plans for the future of BEPS.

- **Is there a waiting List – Priority of Access Policy (POA) in place at BEPS OSHC?**

Yes, we have always had a simple waiting list and POA policy in place. This year we have had to review, clarify and intensify these policies and procedures, due to the fact that OSHC places are now in high demand and competition for those places is high.

- **Is there a booking system process, what will it be for 2014?**

Yes, there has always been a booking system process in place, however due to lower demand we have not had to implement such strict guidelines for allocation of places, as we will be needing for 2014, and the years to follow. We have developed two main policies, passed by School Council, that govern how the enrolment and booking system will operate;

- Enrolment Policy
- Waiting List and Priority of Access Policy

These policies represent a complex system, designed to be as fair and equitable as possible. We do understand, there may be some teething problems, but we will be able to fine tune the process as we go. Also keeping in mind that the Enrolment process is based on incoming enrolments for each year and the entire needs and therefore usage of the community – this will go up and down, depending on the intakes for the school. The Enrolment Policy and Waiting List and Priority of Access Policy for the most part represent legislative requirements for childcare, and also reflect the practices of local childcare and out of school care programs. Where decisions had to be made, we have endeavoured to be consistent with our peers.

- **How will the booking system be reviewed?**

Review of the new booking system policies will be in March 2014, by the OSHC Sub Committee of Management and the School Council. This will give us time to see how the first part of the Re-Enrolment process has worked and what has not. We can then make changes based on experience and feedback, our focus will always be to maximise the support for families, and ensure all legislation is complied with.

- **What alternatives are available to families who do not have a place in the OSHC program?**

- Families will need to network amongst themselves to share care of each other's children
- Utilize babysitters/carers/family daycare
- Afterschool activities; martial arts; sports; art; dance; etc
- Change days of work
- Seek extended family support

- Often care is available before school, so families could consider working early in the day rather than later.

- **Why does one family get a place over another family and who decides this?**

The new Enrolments and Re-enrolments policy and procedure for 2014 will decide this;

- Priority of Access status
- Individual family circumstances
- Families who return their forms by due date, dated in order of receipt
- Offers in two stages; families who are current users; then siblings; then incoming preps and others.
- Consultation with the OSHC Coordinator, OSHC Sub Committee of Management and School Council

All decisions regarding placements, will be handled in a private and confidential manner, and will not be able to be discussed with members of the community. Families are assured that the policies will be enacted to the letter to ensure fairness.

- **How will Priority of Access (POA) status be proved and accounted for?**

Families wishing to claim POA status will need to provide written documentary evidence to be kept on file; health care cards, Centrelink letters, letters from doctors/counsellors/psychologists, etc. Families may need to provide more evidence if requested.

- **What will change with the new Enrolment system?**

A number of changes have been made, to make the system more equitable, fair and transparent. Please read policies for further clarification, in short;

**Things that will no longer be in place;**

- Ongoing cancellations of permanent bookings from week to week
- 7 days notice of cancellation with no charge
- No charge with medical certificate
- Re-enrolling process at the end of the year

**Things that will remain in place;**

- Casual places will still come up and be available for sale on a weekly/daily basis
- Permanent places may still be available on each day if not filled.
- Notification of places available on a weekly basis will still be posted in the OSHC section of the school newsletter

- **How will Families be informed of the new Re-enrolment process and know when the Re-enrolment process starts?**

- The new policies & re-enrolment timetable will be posted on the school website
- The new policies & re-enrolment timetable will be emailed out to families (during round one)
- The new policies & re-enrolment timetable will be available for pick-up

- New policies & re-enrolment timetable will be posted on OSHC noticeboards
- Notices of re-enrolment timetable process will be out in OSHC section of the School Newsletter
- The new policies & re-enrolment timetable will be available at prep transition evenings

- **How will Prep families get this information?**

- The new policies & re-enrolment timetable will be available at prep transition events.
- At the school front office for pick-up
- Families can request they be emailed to them (need to provide email)

- **If Families have further questions regarding OSHC?**

Contact the OSHC Service;

OSHC Coordinator; Ranita Swamy

Mobile; 0409380202

Ph; 03 93872631

[swamy.ranita.r@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:swamy.ranita.r@edumail.vic.gov.au)