

HEATHCOTE EAST OSHC

PARENT HANDBOOK

2025



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Philosophy

At HEPS OSHC we seek to develop a partnership with parents, the Service and school educators; to build relationships where trust and mutual understanding can develop between the home, the Service, and the school. These relationships seek to be secure, respectful, and reciprocal.

We believe that every child and family is unique, therefore our program cycle and routine are collaboratively created to allow children to explore, establish and engage with their interests and grow through self-directed learning.

Our OSHC Service is a play-based Service, and we believe that the children learn as they discover, create, improvise, and imagine. The Service environment is designed to support children's interests, strengths, and needs. The Educators value and build on children's strengths, skills, and knowledge by motivating them and engaging in their learning.

We believe that children are capable, competent, and active learners, and important contributors to their community. Our Service values the importance of childhood as a significant stage of human development as well as the foundation for all later learning and development.

The My Time Our Place Framework will inform the development of our Curriculum and continuous review on learning outcomes will be reflected in the program.

At HEPS OSHC, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, live and play. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water, and community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

We are committed to continuous improvement to ensure the best possible outcomes for all children.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Heathcote East OSHC is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. We have zero tolerance for child abuse and other harm. All children who attend HEPS OSHC have the right to feel and be safe. We are committed to creating an environment that encourages children of all cultures and differing abilities to participate in decisions that affect their lives whilst ensuring their opinion is respected.

Heathcote East OSHC regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance. We are committed to ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation, laws and to ensure a child safe culture is embedded throughout our policies, procedures, and practice.

We are committed in ensuring all members of our OSHC Community understand the important and specific role they play both individually and collectively for the safety and well-being of all children, and their responsibility to child safety is at the forefront of all they do, and every decision made.

Operational Information

Heathcote East Public School outside School Hours Care (OSHC) is in Block D on the grounds of Heathcote East Public School, 5 Mimosa Street, Heathcote.

Operating hours are:

- Before School Care 6.45am-8.45am
- After School Care 3.15pm-6.15pm
- Vacation Care 7am-6pm

Address:

5 Mimosa Street, Heathcote NSW 2233
Parking Available in Mimosa Street.

Contact details:

Phone: 0422705570
Email: info@hepsoshc.org.au
Accounts: accounts@hepsoshc.org.au
Enquiries: 0422 705 570

Approved Provider and Administration

Heathcote East OSHC is a not-for-profit and the Heathcote East Public-School P&C are the Approved Provider. Partners in OSHC are an organisation contracted by the Approved Provider to assist with managing the day to day running of the Service on their behalf. Daily administration tasks are completed by the Service Co-ordinator and overseen by the manager appointed by Partners in OSHC. The family accounts are managed by Partners in OSHC.

Nicole Mellios is the Co-ordinator and Responsible Person at HEPS OSHC each afternoon. Julie Vincent is the Assistant Co-Ordinator and is the Responsible Person each morning. Fiona Sopovski is the Educational Leader. In the absence of Nicole, Julie, or Fiona are qualified casual educators who are the Responsible Person for the shift.

There is a Parent Representative as part of the HEPS P&C who represents the OSHC Service during the P&C meetings.

Enrolment

Families are required to complete enrolment forms online via the My Family Lounge. Casual bookings are accepted where there is availability.

Vacation Care enrolments are completed as above, and the program for the upcoming holiday period will be issued during week 5 of the current term. Once a Vacation Care booking has been made and the day paid for, the booking cannot be cancelled. If there is availability on an alternate day in the same holiday period, the booking may be swapped for a different day.

Please see the enrolment policy attached for further information.

Fees

Fees are paid via direct deposit into the specified account on each family's statements. The Service fees are managed by the Accounts Administrator and any queries should be directed to accounts@hepsoshc.org.au.

HEPS Fees Schedule is reviewed each year and distributed for implementation at the beginning of Term 3. Please see attached our Annual Fee Schedule for more information.

Government Subsidy

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) The Australian Government provides subsidies and programs to help with the cost of childcare. The Child Care Subsidy is the main type of assistance that most families will use.

HEPS OSHC is an Approved Provider of the Child Care Subsidy for Out of School Hours Care (OSHC). For eligible families enrolled, the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) will assist in reducing out of pocket childcare costs and help to make childcare more affordable.

Please note that if your Child Care Subsidy has not yet been approved and finalised by Centrelink, full fee payment will be required. The Service can backdate attendances up to 28 days only.

To find out more about what you may be eligible for, please visit the Department of Human Services website.

For Vacation Care only enrolments, the CCS Enrolment automatically ceases after 14 weeks of inactivity and will need to be reconfirmed for each Vacation Care period.

Additional Child Care Subsidy

The Additional Child Care Subsidy is a top up payment in addition to the Child Care Subsidy which provides targeted additional fee assistance to families and children facing barriers in accessing affordable childcare.

Inclusion Support Program

The Inclusion Support Program assists HEPS OSHC to provide inclusive practices and address barriers to participation for children with ongoing high support needs. It is important that if your child has additional needs, you discuss this further with the Co-ordinator so we can put in the best supports for your child.

When your Child is Absent

Families/ Guardians must notify the Service either by phone or email if your child will be absent for After School Care by 2:30PM. Children are considered missing until we have received information from the family to say their child is safe.

The Government's Child Care Subsidy and Additional Child Care Subsidy are payable for up to 42 initial absence days for a child in a financial year. These absences can be for any reason, including public holidays. For all absences beyond the initial 42 days, full fees will be charged as the Child Care Subsidy cannot be applied.

If you can provide evidence to demonstrate the absence has occurred under permitted circumstances as defined by the Family Assistance Law, additional absence days may be approved. There is no limit on these days, but you will be required to provide documentation to support each absence.

Booking Cancellations

If cancelling a permanent booking, a childcare service is taken to have permanently ceased providing care for a child on the day the child last physically attends a session of care. This means that Child Care Subsidy will not be paid for absences submitted after a child last physically attends a session of care.

Please note: Two weeks' written notice is required to cancel permanent bookings and a minimum of 48 hours is required to cancel casual bookings.

Please see our Fees Policy attached for further information.

Arrival and Departure

It is the responsibility of educators and families to ensure the safe arrival and departure of children at the education and care setting and the completion of statutory documentation. It is a family member's responsibility to sign your child in and out each time they attend the service. Failure to sign for your child's attendance is putting the Service's license in jeopardy as well as your Child Care Subsidy. Please be aware that full fees will be charged for any unsigned attendance, as Child Care Subsidy or the Child Care Rebate cannot be applied for these days.

We use a digital system called 'QK Kiosk' to facilitate a quick and easy sign in/out process for families. You will use your phone number and unique PIN code to sign your child/ren in and out of the Service using our onsite iPads.

The Service will only allow parents or persons stated in writing on the enrolment form with permission to collect to sign children out of the Service. If you are unable to collect your child from the Service, you will need to inform the staff that another person is collecting your child. If they are not authorised on the enrolment form a copy of their identification will need to be sent to the Service by you and upon collection the identification will need to be shown to the educator for cross checking.

Children are not to sign themselves in or out of the Service as these rolls are proof of attendance for the CCS claims and they also act as a roll call throughout the day for security.

Children are not to leave the Service unaccompanied.

Children are not to be left unattended at the Service until opening hours commence. There will be no exceptions to this. It is important that families understand that responsibility for your child/ren only begins once the child has entered the Service (within opening hours).

Custody Arrangements

If you have a legal agreement outlining custody or restraining arrangements, please provide the Service with a copy for our records. Parents are requested to notify the Nominated Supervisor/ Co-ordinator immediately if any legal circumstances change.

Behaviour Guidance

Taking a positive approach to behaviour guidance means understanding that all behaviour is a form of communication. It also means encouraging acceptable forms of behaviour by using strategies that build children's confidence and self-esteem, and providing children with support, guidance, and opportunities to manage their own behaviour. Educators will try to recognise why a child behaves in a certain way and encourage more acceptable forms of behaviour through a positive approach. If your child's educators are having difficulty guiding your child's behaviour, they may seek a meeting with you to discuss a behaviour management plan. It is expected that families work in collaboration with their child's educators with any area of concern and follow-up on referrals should this be requested.

Complaints and Feedback

Our Service values the feedback of educators, staff, families, and the wider community in helping to create a service that meets regulation and the needs of enrolled children and their families. We encourage open communication through opportunities to respond and feedback on the program and other aspects of service provision. A component of this feedback is the ability to put forward a complaint or concern and have this managed appropriately with due consideration for accountability and quality improvement. We encourage families to bring their complaint or concern to the attention of Service staff immediately to be dealt with promptly. We aim to address any concerns with the emphasis on resolving issues in a professional and confidential manner.

Complaints should be raised directly with the Service Co-ordinator to ensure prompt and confidential resolution of the concerns. All complaints are passed onto Partners in OSHC and the Approved Provider.

Policies and Procedures

HEPS OSHC has an extensive policy and procedure manual, which reflects the philosophy and goals of our Service. This manual is a large document, which is made available for you to read upon request. This family handbook contains a small overview of a few of our policies, which will affect you, your family and children. Policies and Procedures are updated yearly, or when required.

Communication with Families

Educators at HEPS OSHC makes a constant effort to communicate with families when dropping off or picking up their children, about how their child/ren have been going, what they've been involved in etc. When enrolling your child/ren you will be informed about various communication methods used at our Service.

Priority of Access and Non-Discriminatory Access

HEPS OSHC will ensure that parents and children have access to quality childcare that is appropriate to their needs, regardless of income, social, religious or cultural backgrounds, gender or abilities. We primarily provide care for Heathcote East Public-School children aged between 5 and 12. We can provide care for early high school age children and students from other schools if there are places available. The Service also follows the priority of access guidelines set down by the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services. These guidelines will be balanced with the principles of non - discriminatory access and inclusion.

Confidentiality

All personal records you provide to us, will be stored securely and kept confidential. All information will be strictly limited to use by the service.

Family Participation

Ways to participate in our Service include:

- Joining our Committee, requiring you to come to meetings once a term & provide input on behalf of parents using OSHC.
- Giving suggestions/ideas for vacation care, craft, cooking, sports and feedback on how programs are going.
- Giving some of your time and joining us on excursions or participating in the program.

Program

The current program is displayed on the Parent Noticeboard. All educators, children and families are invited to contribute ideas and observations so that the most appropriate provision is made. Please speak to the Co-ordinator if you have suggestions or you would like to see what activities your child has been involved with.

National Quality Framework

The National Quality Framework introduced a new quality standard in 2012 to improve education and care across long day care, family day care, preschool/kindergarten, and outside school hours care services.

The National Quality Framework (NQF) provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services across Australia.

The NQF includes:

- National Law and National Regulations
- National Quality Standard
- assessment and quality rating process
- national learning frameworks.

National Law and Regulations

The National Law and National Regulations outline the legal obligations of Approved Providers, Nominated Supervisors, and educators and explain the powers and functions of the state and territory regulatory authorities and ACECQA.

The National Law sets a National Standard for Children's Education and Care across Australia.

National Regulations

The National Regulations support the National Law by providing detail on a range of operational requirements for an education and care service.

A copy of the National Laws and Regulations is available on the Service laptop.

National Quality Standard

The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services in Australia.

The NQS includes 7 quality areas that are important outcomes for children.

Services are assessed and rated by their regulatory authority against the NQS and given a rating for each area of the 7 quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.

The 7 Quality Areas are:

- Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice
- Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety
- Quality Area 3 – Physical environment
- Quality Area 4 – Staffing arrangements
- Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children
- Quality Area 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Quality Area 7 – Governance and leadership

Approved Learning Frameworks

Under the National Law and Regulations, Services are required to base their educational program on an approved learning framework. This should focus on addressing the developmental needs, interests, and experiences of each child, while taking into account individual differences.

My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia is the approved learning framework under the NQF for school age children.

The My Time Our Place framework informs the development of the program, and all educators should be familiar with the concepts of the curriculum, a copy of the My Time Our Place framework is available within the Service and a copy will be issued to all educators when commencing employment.

Nutrition

Breakfast is served from 6:45am each day. Breakfast consists of Milk, cereal, toast & spreads, yoghurt, and fruit. Hot breakfasts will be served each week such as pancakes, bacon and eggs, omelettes etc.

Afternoon tea is served between 3:30pm – 4.00 pm. Afternoon tea consists of fruit or vegetable platters and a healthy snack. There is a 4-week rotating menu that is created from parent surveys, children's surveys, suggestions, and a nutrition checklist. These are completed seasonally during summer and winter.

During vacation care children should bring a packed lunch every day, morning tea and afternoon tea unless stated otherwise on the program.

Suitable Clothing

Please ensure that when your child is attending OSHC that they are wearing suitable clothing for the day and that it is in-line with our SunSmart Policy. Caps are not recommended (bucket, broad-brim or legionnaire hats are preferred and encouraged). Singlet tops or tops not covering the child's arms are discouraged, as well as thongs for safety. Please also keep in mind that a few things the child/ren do at OSHC are messy & while we do the best to keep them from getting their clothes dirty (e.g., smocks for painting), they may get their clothes dirty from time to time.

Personal Items

HEPS OSHC does not encourage children to bring items from home, such as toys, handheld computer games etc. The service assumes no responsibility for damage or loss to any item belonging to any person. Lost or left behind items will be placed in the lost property box in the school office or in the bag room of the OSHC building.

Children are not permitted to use mobile phones at the Service. If families choose to allow their children to carry a mobile phone, children may keep them stored in the office until collection time by their family or guardian.

Health and Hygiene

Comprehensive Food Handling and Cleaning procedures are implemented by all educators and Health and Safety check listing is undertaken daily, weekly, and monthly to ensure compliance with all aspects of the Service's safe operation.

An allergy and asthma register is maintained for all children enrolled. Educators must be aware of each child's allergy and the appropriate response should a child become reactive.

Sun Safety

Sunscreen is provided at the service. We adhere to a strict Sun Smart Policy. Our service provides sunscreen, or you may choose to provide your own.

Parents must provide permission within their enrolment to have sunscreen applied at the service. Children must also wear a hat whilst outdoors. We abide by the “No Hat ... day in the shade” theory.

Safety

Educators are vigilant as to the safety of the immediate environment and individual children’s actions to reduce the risk of accidents occurring. This includes reinforcing and modelling messages about the use of chairs, not tables for sitting, walking inside, respecting others, appropriate dress, shoes and hygiene, etc.

A WHS Committee meets regularly, and the Approved Provider are kept fully informed as to any identified requirements to ensure the health and safety at the Service. All educators have a responsibility to report concerns or issues to the WHS representative and/or Approved Provider as well as to comply with the Service’s WHS policies and procedures.

Accident Procedure

In the event of an accident the following procedures will be implemented by OSHC staff:

- Assess the injury.
- Attend to injured child and administer first aid.
- Contact parent (depending on the nature of the injury). If the parent is not contacted at the time of the accident they will be informed about the accident when they arrive to collect the child.
- In case of serious injury, arrange transport of the child by ambulance to hospital. A staff member will accompany the child to hospital taking all the child’s records. Note: the program is not responsible for ambulance fees.
- Complete a child accident report.

In the event of a child requiring urgent medical treatment and all attempts have been made to notify parents/guardians, the Service is authorised to obtain medical, hospital and/or ambulance services, including consent from a medical practitioner regarding treatment.

Medication

If your child requires medication whilst at OSHC, you will need to supply written authority stating the drug, dosage, date and times to be administered. Medication forms are available upon request.

On the form all details and signatures are required, or the medication is not authorised to be administered to your child.

Staff will only administer medication if it is:

- A prescribed oral medication.
- Accompanied by a letter from a medical practitioner stating time to administer.
- In its original package with pharmacist’s label which clearly states the child’s name, dosage, frequency of administration, date of dispensing and expiry date.
- All medication will be administered by a qualified staff member and will be recorded in the medication folder, which will be signed off by another witness.

Children who become ill at the service will be provided a quiet area while their parents/guardians are contacted.

Asthma

Parents are requested to advise the Service when enrolling their child of their child's asthma. Every child that suffers from Asthma will need to have an Asthma plan form filled out and signed by their doctor as well as a signed Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan. Please see the Co-ordinator for further details.

Food Allergies and Anaphylaxis

Food allergies in children are common and can be due to many food items. Children who have had previous anaphylactic events should be identified upon enrolment. Parents will be asked to complete an "Action Plan for Anaphylaxis" in consultation with their child's practitioner. This form and any required training will be carried out prior to the child commencing at the Service. Families with children with allergies will be provided with the appropriate policies and a Risk Minimisation Plan will be created with the family to ensure the safety of the child while they are attending the Service.

Heathcote East OSHC is an "Allergy Aware" environment. Nut products such as peanut butter, Nutella, chocolate, muesli bars as well as tree nuts are not to be consumed by any child or adult while at the Service.

Emergency Procedures

A First Aid Qualified Educator is always rostered on during the Service's hours of operation. There are two first aid kits – one is portable for taking on excursions etc, the second is permanently located in the kitchen.

Emergency evacuation procedures are displayed in the office area and in each room. Educators are required to read this upon employment at the Service.

Emergency procedures are rehearsed with the children every three months and regularly discussed to ensure understanding.

Facilities and Equipment

The Service has a wide range of toys, games and equipment for children's use. This is maintained by educators being aware of their responsibilities in teaching the children how to effectively use and clear away anything which they have used. Activities should be left ready for the next child or group to use so that the room is tidy, game pieces and other materials are accounted for and are easily traced.

When finishing a period of supervision in an area, educators will routinely check the area for any equipment which may have been left out. Children will also be encouraged to do this.

The Service has been designed to provide a safe and attractive space for children and educators to use. All educators are required to maintain the space by regular attention to its appearance – noticeboards, information, children's work, equipment, set up of activities, play spaces must be routinely checked and tidied.

Child Protection

Educators in OSHC Services are mandatory reporters and must be aware of their responsibilities in relation to this role. Educators are required to complete formal child protection training which is delivered by an approved trainer/accessed online.

The Service holds a comprehensive Child Protection Policy which is regularly reviewed and implemented. A brief overview of the main elements of the Policy is given in the “Child Protection Practices” overview which is given as part of the Employment package. This document is also reviewed and discussed regularly by educators at staff meetings.