



CONCORD OSHC

# Parent Handbok 2024

Updated December 2023

# Welcome!

The Educators and Management Committee of Concord Out Of School Hours School Care (COOSH) welcome you to the Centre. We hope that you find your time with our service a happy and rewarding one.

The following handbook is designed to assist you to understand some of the Centre's basic policies. Please feel free to clarify anything you may not understand with the Educators at the Centre. For a more detailed listing of the Centre's policies please refer to the COOSH Policies and Procedures document.

COOSH was established in 1990 by former parents of Concord Public School to provide a before and after school care service for children attending Concord Public School and neighbouring schools. We are a not for profit, community based centre run by a Parent Management Committee.

We aim to provide a quality education and recreational program for children who require before and after school care in a fun, stimulating, nurturing and safe environment for all children. It is our hope that we can work side by side with parents and carers in ensuring that the program meets the needs of the children and their families.

COOSH is a separate organisation from the Concord Public School P&C Association; however, we work alongside the P&C and the school executive to improve services and facilities within the school for the families of Concord Public School.

COOSH is registered with the Early Childhood Education Directorate, NSW Department of Education as a provider of an Out of School Hours service under the *Education and Care Services National Law* and the [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#).

## Acknowledgement to Country

We acknowledge the Wangal people, one of the 29 tribes of the Eora nation, as the traditional custodians of the land we use at COOSH and recognise their continuing connection to land, water, and community.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and future and extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples visiting and using COOSH.

## **OUR Philosophy**

At COOSH we believe that every child can reach their full potential in a caring, safe, positive environment. We recognise the importance of social interactions for a child's evolution of self-identity and sense of belonging. As a result, we aim to stimulate learning across different formats, helping children make sense of their social competencies by encouraging engagement in meaningful play.

We acknowledge the paramount influences parents and families have on a child's growth and development particularly across middle childhood. We therefore encourage and welcome parents and families to become actively involved in and participate in their child's out of hours school experience. We hope to assist with the involvement by providing effective communication to families. At COOSH, we appreciate the diversity of the school community and the positive influence it has on all children's development; therefore, we are committed to ensuring that the unique values and beliefs of each child and family are recognised and respected by all individuals at COOSH.

Our team of qualified and passionate educators each utilise their unique skills, knowledge and abilities to plan and implement programs that provide appropriate play and leisure opportunities that are meaningful to children in supporting their wellbeing, development and learning whilst also ensuring a high level of duty of care is provided for all of the children at all times. Our educators encourage and recognise the importance of being placed on collaborative play whilst retaining each child's independence.

## **COOSH Parent Management Committee**

COOSH is run by a Parent Management Committee and is responsible for the operation of the service (Educators, fees, provision of equipment, planning and programming, bookings, rolls, etc.); Concord Public School owns the building from which the service operates. In order to ensure that the needs of families and the school community are met the Parent Management Committee holds a meeting once a school term to discuss the management of the service.

If you would like to talk to one of the current Committee Members, please contact the Centre on 0449 734 922 or via email [committee@concordshc.com.au](mailto:committee@concordshc.com.au)

## **The COOSH Team**

### **Centre Director: Karen Taare**

Karen has been with COOSH since 2007; Karen has a very creative nature and enjoys spending her time creating art and craft activities with the COOSH students.

### **Centre Coordinator & 2IC: Christina Chami**

Christina joined the COOSH team in 2022. Christina is studying a Bachelor of Commerce at Macquarie University. Christina creates the educational weekly program incorporating fun and creative craft activities and exciting cooking challenges. She's always ready for any questions you may have or for a laugh!

### **Assistant Co-ordinator: Julie Taare**

Julie has worked at COOSH for more than 20 years; Julie can often be found cooking up a storm and works hard to provide our COOSH students with delicious breakfast and afternoon tea options. Julie works most mornings and afternoons.

### **Senior Educator & Certified Supervisor: Emily Gould**

Emily joined the COOSH team in 2022. Emily is currently studying a bachelor of Social Work at Australian Catholic University. Emily introduces fun and innovative outdoor activities to the Coosh educational program through her background in sports. You'll usually find Emily singing and dancing!

We have a wonderful group of Casual Educators also working in the centre. Their staff profiles can be viewed at the centre or via the COOSH website [www.concordoshc.com.au](http://www.concordoshc.com.au)

## Hours of Operation

COOSH is open during NSW School Terms. We do not operate during designated National and NSW Public Holidays; however, we are open during Government School Holidays and Concord Public School Pupil Free Days UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE. Our normal operating hours are:

<b><u>Before School Care</u></b>	
Monday to Friday	<b>7:00 am – 9:00 am</b> (Breakfast Provided)
<b><u>After School Care</u></b>	
Monday to Friday	<b>3:00 pm – 6:00 pm</b> (Afternoon Tea Provided)
<b><u>Vacation Care</u></b>	
Monday to Friday	<b>7:00 pm – 6:00 pm</b> (Breakfast Provided)

## Daily Program

We aim to provide daily routines that meet the needs of individual children and to implement a balanced and structured program that is stimulating, interesting and rewarding. COOSH provides opportunities for children to play, explore and develop new skills and our program is designed with a focus on childrens developmental and leisure needs. Whilst all children are encouraged to join in, children can choose which activities they would like to engage in, COOSH values free play.

Children are always encouraged to participate in COOSH's daily program by writing suggestions and placing them in the "Suggestions Box" at the Centre, located on top of the craft cupboards. The weekly program can be viewed on the noticeboard at the Centre.

## Meals

Breakfast is provided from 7:00 am – 8:00 am and includes toast, cheese toasties, a variety of cereals, oats, milk, hot chocolate, milo and water. A copy of the weekly menu is displayed at the Centre.

Afternoon tea is provided between 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm. We aim to provide nutritious and varied meals. Examples include sandwiches, pasta, savory biscuits and spreads etc. A variety of fresh fruit is provided every day.

Consideration is given to children with special dietary needs and the meals provided are adjusted based on any special requirements. Please note any dietary requirements on your enrolment form, these can also be discussed with the centre. Special attention is paid to government guidelines and health aware choices.

**Anaphylaxis** is the most acute and serious form of allergy. Approximately 1 in 200 individuals will experience such a reaction. Nuts are responsible for many reactions. For this reason, COOSH is a nut free centre and does not provide any nut based products.

## Attendance

Children may be booked to attend on either a permanent (regular) or casual basis, subject to availability. If you wish to change your child/ren's attendance days, either permanently or for a temporary period during term, it is vital that you change bookings through the portal or notify us via email.

## Cancellation of Bookings

**Permanent Bookings:** Permanent Bookings: If you find that you need to make a change to a permanent booking for before or after school care, including adding a new booking or cancellation of a current booking, you must make this change online by logging into your account via the portal. If the cut off time has passed (Friday morning 9am for permanent changes for the following week,) the changes must be made from the next available week. In the intervening period, permanent bookings that won't be attended must be marked as absences, and additional bookings required must be booked as casual sessions. **Fees for absences will continue to be charged until the**

**booking is cancelled.**

**Casual Bookings:** To make a change to a casual booking, including adding a new casual booking or cancellation of a current casual booking you must make this change online via the portal by midday the business day prior to the booking. Any additions or cancellations of casual sessions after this time must be made via email or phone with the centre. Additions of casual sessions must be made prior to the commencement of the session, and must be confirmed by the centre. Morning casual bookings must be cancelled prior to the end of the morning session to not be charged. Afternoon casual booking cancellations must be made prior to the commencement of the afternoon session for these not to be charged. **Failure to advise by the time specified will result in fees still being charged even if your child does not attend.**

All Booking changes are to be made via the portal. You can gain access by navigating your way through our website [www.concordoshc.com.au](http://www.concordoshc.com.au)

## **Absent Children**

Parents/Guardians are to advise the Centre if their child will be absent for any reason, separately to advising the school. If the absence is for a permanent booking, you will still be charged for the day. Charges for casual sessions will depend on when the cancellation is made. Please view booking section above. If the centre is not notified, Centre Educators are required to perform a search for your child. This includes physically searching the school playground, phoning parents / guardians / authorised nominees, and if unable to locate the child, or speak to parents, involves calling the Police to advise of a missing child. **NON-NOTIFICATION FEES may apply where the centre is not informed of a child absence.** If families are aware of their child being away in advance, an 'away' notice must be provided via the bookings section of the portal.

## Fees and Charges

The management committee are responsible for setting fees based on the annual budget and ensuring that the required income will be received to run the service efficiently. Fees will be reviewed each term based on attendance and the Centre's ability to meet the running costs. Parents will be given at least 14 day's notice of any changes in the fees. Invoice Statements are generated and emailed fortnightly (i.e. every 2 weeks).

The current fee structure is as follows:

<b><u>Before School Care (AM)</u></b>	
Permanent booking	\$15.00 each session
Casual booking	\$18.00 each session
<b><u>After School Care (PM)</u></b>	
Permanent booking	\$26.00 each session
Casual booking	\$29.00 each session
<b><u>Surcharges</u></b>	
Early penalty (drop-off before 7:00 am and Late fee (pick-up after 6:00 pm)	\$10.00 for first 5 minutes
	\$1.00 per 1 minute thereafter
Non-Notification with Bookings and Cancellations	\$5.00
Not Signing Child/ren In/Out	\$5.00

Concord OSHC is a direct debit only centre and uses Ezidebit as the only accepted means of fee payment. All families must set up their direct debit details through the portal at the time of enrolment or by clicking on the Ezidebit option under the parent menu.

Where a Direct Debit dishonors, Parents will be sent an email requesting immediate payment. Fees that still remain overdue after 7 days following statement send will be sent a reminder requesting immediate payment. 2 weeks later, a second reminder will be sent if fees still remain outstanding. Failure to make payment after a further 2 days will then result in a direct phone call, with a payment plan being required. Failure to respond to the phone call, or make payment as per the agreed payment plan will result in referral of the debt to the Management Committee, and recommendation of bookings being canceled. The outstanding amount may be forwarded onto a Debt Recovery Agency. The family will not be able to attend COOSH until the situation has been

rectified i.e. all remaining fees be paid up to date.

If a collection agency is engaged to recover monies, the parent will be liable for any costs, charges, commissions and expenses reasonably and properly payable by COOSH to such collection agency and/or solicitors relating to the recovery of such sum.

Where a family is consistently late with making payment, this will be referred to the Centre's Management Committee for appropriate action. This may include the requirement for prepayment of bookings.

**If you are having difficulties paying your invoices, please contact 9878 2651 (Becklyn) to discuss a payment plan.**

## **Child Care Subsidy Eligibility**

Some basic requirements must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy for a child. These include:

- the age of the child (must be aged 13 or under and not attending secondary school, except in certain circumstances where an individual may be eligible for a child who does not meet this criteria, such as children with a disability or medical condition)
- the child meeting immunisation requirements
- the individual, or their partner, meeting the residency requirements listed in the legislation.
- The individual, or their partner, caring for the child for at least 2 nights per fortnight, or having 14% care.

In addition, to be eligible for Child Care Subsidy the individual must be liable to pay for care provided, the care must be delivered in Australia by an approved childcare provider, and not be part of a compulsory education program.

## **Child Care Subsidy entitlement**

There are three factors that determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy. These are:

- **Combined annual family income**
- **Activity test** – the activity level of both parents
- **Service type** – type of childcare service and whether the child attends school

The Child Care Subsidy is generally paid directly to service providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction. Families make a co-contribution to their childcare

fees and pay to the provider the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount.

There is also targeted additional fee assistance for vulnerable families through the **Additional Child Care Subsidy**.

Families can get an estimate of what they may be entitled to by entering their details into the **Department of Human Services Payment and Service Finder**.

## Resources

A range of information resources are available to assist families and providers. [www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy](http://www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy)

## Family Contact Details

It is your responsibility to notify us immediately of any changes to your contact details or those of any person whom you have nominated as an emergency contact. You can log into your account via the portal and complete these details. Once completed you and the Centre Director will receive notification that changes have been made.

**Please be advised that an online enrolment form with updated details will be required annually for parents that wish to continue care with the service.**

In the event of an emergency, COOSH will not be held responsible if contact details and numbers have not been updated and Educators are unable to contact you, or another nominated authorised person.

## Daily Attendance Register

It is a **legal requirement** that parents must sign children into before school care and out of after school care rolls when dropping off and collecting children and note the time of arrival and departure. **Children are not to sign themselves in or out, this action must be completed by someone over the age of 18.**

Only nominated persons listed on the enrolment form can collect the child/ren. To add an extra authorised nominee, please log in to the parent portal. Authorised nominees will need to provide a current NSW Drivers license, if unknown by center staff, for proof of Identity.

For the safety of the children; once the afternoon roll call has been taken at the school, the children may only be collected after completion of the roll call at the Centre. **Children are not to be collected en-route to the Centre.** Educators will only sign

children out of before school care and sign in children for after school care. Only under special circumstances, will Educators be able to sign your child in or out.

## **Policies and Procedures**

A series of guidelines and procedures for the service have been developed. These are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are kept up to date with legislation, community expectations and respond to any ongoing concerns. We hope that you will take the opportunity to share your thoughts with us on this.

A copy of our Policies and Procedures can be located on COOSH website. Our policies and procedures include (but are not limited to)

- Enrolment
- Fees and changes
- Delivery and collection of children
- Accidents, illness and medical treatments
- Child protection
- Complaints handling
- Minimising the spread of infections
- Provision and preparation of food

## **Complaints & Compliments**

We believe that parents have an important role in the Centre, and we value their comments. We aim to ensure that parents feel free to communicate any concerns they have in relation to the Centre, Educators, management, programs, or policies, without any negative consequences. We are committed to the continuous improvement our service.

If you wish to comment on any aspect of the service, please write it down and put it in our suggestions box, speak with the Centre Director/Coordinator or come along to one of the term Committee meetings.

Alternatively, you can send an email addressed to the Committee Members to [info@concordoshc.com.au](mailto:info@concordoshc.com.au)

## **Early Drop-Off/ Late Collection**

Our opening times are 7:00 am for before school care and 7:00am for Vacation Care. Parents are not able to leave their child at the center prior to the center opening.

Our closing time is 6:00 pm. Parents who collect their children after 6:00 pm will be charged a late fee. If you realise that you are going to be late collecting your child/ren, please contact the Centre immediately. If a child has not been collected by 6:30 pm and attempts to contact the parents and authorised persons have failed, Educators will contact NSW Department of Communities and Justice (formerly FaCs/DoCS) and the police. This then becomes a legal matter.

## **Allergies**

To ensure that we can provide safe and effective care to children, parents are required to advise Educators of any allergies that your child may have. Families of children that have food allergies or anaphylaxis will be required to notify this during enrolment, or as soon as this is known by the families, and provide the appropriate ASCIA Action Plan. All other allergies will be required to be notified via enrolment, or as soon as they are known, and must be accompanied by a Medical Management plan that has been developed in consultation with a medical practitioner. The appropriate Medical Management Plans / Action Plans must be received prior to the Child's enrolment being approved for the Centre. In addition to the Action Plan or Medical Management Plan, an Individual Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan will be designed between the center and parent. Action Plans must be updated prior to the review date on the action plan, or where no review date is listed, within 18 months of the writing of the plan. This can only be updated in conjunction with a Medical Practitioner. Where the plan reaches the review date, or where no review date is noted, reaches the 18 months since the plan was written, center staff may suspend a child's enrolment until the updated plan is provided.

Please ensure that you refer to the Allergies Policy in the COOSH policies and procedures manual.

## **Asthma Action Plan**

Parents of any child with asthma are required to notify the center during enrolment, and provide an Asthma Care Plan, completed in conjunction with a Medical Practitioner. This plan will advise the Educators of the actions they should take should your child become unwell with asthma. Asthma Plans must be reviewed prior to the review date noted, or where no review date is noted, within 12 months of the writing of the plan. Where the plan reaches the review date, or where no review date is noted, reaches the 12 months since the plan was written, center staff may suspend a child's enrolment until the updated plan is provided. In addition to the Asthma Care Plan, an Individual Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan will be designed between the centre and parent.

## **Accident/ Illness**

In the event of a medical emergency involving your child, our priority is to organise immediate medical attention. We will attempt to contact parents as soon as possible after organising any immediate medical attention.

If a parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the child's family doctor or other medical help will be sought. If their condition is serious, an ambulance will be called.

Whilst Educators provide constant and careful supervision, they will not be liable for any injury to your child/ren's person or property whilst in the Centre, the school playground and equipment or on any outing organised by the Centre (unless negligence on the part of the Centre is proven).

It is important that the service maintains a safe and hygienic environment that will promote the health of the children. Please understand that we do not have the facilities or resources to care for children who are unwell. Therefore, parents must not bring sick children to the Centre. If your child becomes unwell whilst at the Centre, we will attempt to contact you and request that you collect your child.

Children with infectious diseases will be excluded from the Centre for the period recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council. Infectious diseases information and the exclusion periods can be found in the parent resources folders or at [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)

## **Medication**

We are only able to administer medication to your child, except in the case of a medical emergency, if:

- You have completed a "Permission to Administer Medication Form" (which you can get from the nominated supervisor), including details of time and dosage; and
- The medication is in its original container including original label with the name of the child, is prescribed for that child, and is prior to the expiry date OR
- In the case of non-prescription medication will only be given if it is provided in its original container, bearing the original label and instructions, and before the expiry or use by date.

Any medication must be given directly to the Responsible Person, and not left in the child's bag

## **Immunisation**

On enrolment, you **MUST** supply the Centre with a copy of each child's IMMUNISATION RECORD or EXEMPTION. Parents are to record the child's immunisation status as part of the enrolment process. Children not immunised will be excluded in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease.

## **Sun Protection**

We aim to ensure that all children attending the Centre will be protected from harmful rays of the sun. All Educators are encouraged to model appropriate sun protection behaviour and enforce the sun protection policy. Please ensure that your child has a hat each day as the Centre has a no hat/play in the shade policy.

The Centre will provide, for application, SPF 50+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen. All children will be required to apply the sunscreen, or their own alternative sunscreen, if they wish to play in the sun, in accordance with our sun protection policy.

## **Code of Behaviour**

Whilst at COOSH, children are expected to follow the basic rules below to encourage appropriate behavior therefore ensuring a pleasant environment that can be maintained:

At COOSH we:

- Respect each other
- Respect the Educators
- Respect property belonging to COOSH and others
- Respect school property and school rules
- Use acceptable language
- Play within boundaries
- Cooperate
- Pack away after ourselves
- Do not hurt each other

If necessary, behavior management techniques appropriate to the child's age/stage of development will be used. If negative behavior persists despite reasonable efforts by Educators to encourage and involve the child in a positive way, then the management committee reserves the right to suspend, or if necessary, terminate, a child's enrolment. This is particularly the case where the safety, security and physical wellbeing of other children may be threatened.

Please keep in mind that school records are confidential and are not passed on to the Centre. We therefore encourage you to inform Educators if your child has any behavioral concerns, so we can provide them with the best care possible. All discussions will be confidential.

## **Conditions of Enrolment**

COOSH aims to provide a quality, caring and safe before and after school care program for your child/ren. Council seeks your cooperation by complying with the conditions set out in this handbook (summarised below), and the Centre's Policies and Procedures Manual. Your finalisation of the enrolment process online indicates your acceptance of these conditions.

1. The COOSH Enrolment Form and/or Booking Form must be completed prior to acceptance of any child into the program. We will contact you to confirm acceptance details of enrolment.

2. Before commencing care, a \$20 annual fee will be charged. This is a **1 off fee PER FAMILY, PER YEAR (unless it is a split account)**
3. Fees are reviewed each-term, any proposed changes will be notified to all parents at least two weeks prior.
4. All children who attend must be booked in. Parents/guardians will be phoned and asked to collect their child/ren if this is not so. Where children do not have a booking, they will be taken to the school office for notification of Parents/guardians.
5. Once a permanent booking has been made, fees are payable whether the child attends or not, until the booking is canceled.
6. Casual use of the service is dependent on whether there are spaces available on the days required.
7. Cancellation of permanent bookings must be made online by Friday 9am prior to the week of the change, otherwise fees will continue to be charged.
8. Accounts in arrears or overdue: face possible cancellation of bookings or enrolment
9. If a debt collection agency is engaged to recover monies, the parent shall be liable for any costs, charges, commissions and expenses reasonably and properly payable by COOSH to such collection agency and/or solicitors relating to the recovery of such sum.
10. It is a legal requirement that children must be signed in/out by their parents/guardians or authorised nominee at the beginning/end of the day when they are dropped off/collected from the Centre.
11. If children are not attending the service on a day they are booked, the Centre must be notified in line with the required time frames.
12. For the safety of the children once the afternoon roll has been taken at the school the children may only be collected after completion of the roll call at the Centre. Children will not be allowed to be picked up en-route to the Centre.
13. Only those persons nominated on the enrolment form will be able to collect children. Written permission, or in an emergency verbal permission by telephone, is required if someone else is to collect the child/ren. If someone is prohibited from visiting the Centre or collecting your child/ren this information must be included on the enrolment form. A copy of any relevant court orders must be provided.
14. A late fee will be charged for children who are collected late i.e. after closing time of 6:00 pm. Late fees are currently charged at \$10.00 for the first 5 minutes and then \$1 per minute thereafter. Please inform the Centre if you think you may be late so that your child/ren can be informed.
15. If a child has not been collected by 6:30 pm and attempts to contact the parents and authorised persons have failed, Educators will contact NSW Department of

Family and Community Services (FACS formerly DoCS) and the Police. It then becomes a legal matter.

16. The program cannot cater for children who are unwell. If a child becomes ill whilst in care, Educators will notify parents and the child is to be collected as soon as possible afterwards. Make sure your contact numbers are current.
17. You understand that Educators are required to seek out the appropriate medical care and/or call an ambulance in cases of emergencies or where your child is unwell and you or the contact persons listed on the form are unable to be contacted.
18. Whilst the Centre Educators provide constant and careful supervision, they will not be liable whatsoever for any injury sustained to your child's person or property whilst in the Centre or on any outing organised by the Centre (unless negligence on the part of the Centre is proven).
19. No medication will be administered to children unless the following steps have been followed:
  - Medication form is completed with details of the time of dose, exact dose to be administered and the name of the medication is for the child and signed by the parent/guardian thereby agreeing to the Centres policy relating to the Administration of Medication.
  - The medication is in the original bottle with the child's name and dosage marked on it and given to authorised Educators
  - Medication is not to be left in the children's bags for them to self-administer.
20. Details of any medical conditions, special needs or family circumstances that may assist Educators in working with your child are to be included on the enrolment form.
21. You agree to have Centre Educators apply SPF 30 sunscreen to your child. If your child is allergic to sunscreen you will advise the Centre so that a non-allergenic sunscreen can be purchased.
22. All changes to enrolment information must be updated via the portal.
23. If a child's behavior is such that it endangers the safety of them, other children or Educators, your child's attendance will be reviewed in consultation with the parents.
24. You have received, read, understand and agree with all COOSH policies and procedures. Non-compliance of any of the above conditions and those mentioned in the Centre's Policies and Procedures will result in the attendance of the child/ren at the Centre being reviewed.