

# ***Wahroonga After School Care Centre***



## ***Parent Handbook***

**(Please note: There is a set of full guidelines available  
to look at the centre)**



## **The Philosophy Of Wahroonga After School Care Inc.**

Our service Wahroonga After School Care Inc., seeks to build respectful unbiased relationships with school age children. We will work together with the children to create an environment that is secure, safe, supportive and challenging. We believe in allowing each child to display their individual talents and uniqueness, which will then help to empower them to make contributions to their broader world.

We endeavour to facilitate a play-based program which children contribute to, help organise and actively engage in activities and relationships. Our aim is for the program to provide optimum opportunity for children to develop, explore and learn at their individual levels.

We acknowledge and respect the importance and diversity of families and their values. We encourage all families to be involved with the centre, and will look for opportunities for families to participate in experiences that demonstrate their cultural values and differences.

The heart of the service is through the educators (staff) who value their experiences, skills and meaningful relationships and interactions with the children. They are thoughtful in their decision and action with children, parents and other educators.

We strive to maintain complementary, meaningful relationships with parents, staff, children, the school and the community in which we can learn from each other.

### Hours of Operation

	<b>Before School Care</b>	<b>After School Care</b>
<b>During the term (Monday-Friday)</b>	7am-9am	3:15pm-6:30pm
<b>Vacation Care (2 weeks each school holidays)</b>	7am-6pm	
<b>Public Holidays</b>	CLOSED	
<b>Development Days</b>	CLOSED	

### Service Access

Places are filled according to the Priority of Access Guidelines (Employment and Workplace Relations: The Department of Education), which states:

**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 New Tax System ( Family Assistance) Act 1999

**Priority 3:** Other children

The Centre has five (5) casual positions for Before and After School Care. These positions are for emergency occasions and bookings will only be accepted 48 hours in advance.

### Enrolment

The enrolment process for the following school year begins each year in September. The centre does not have ongoing enrolment or waiting lists.

An enrolment form must be fully completed and enrolment fee (\$50 per child) paid by each family before the child can attend the centre. Enrolment forms are to be updated and resubmitted yearly as well as when changes to the family's circumstances occur. This is the responsibility of each family. All information records are stored securely.

The enrolment form contains all relevant details for each child. This includes emergency contacts, special requirements and custodial/access agreements (including copies of orders and alterations).

### Financial Management

#### **Fee Setting**

All fees are set annually by the Parent Committee. Fees will be based on the annual budget, ensuring that the required income will be received to run the centre effectively.

#### **Fee Payment**

	<b>Fee Payment Arrangement</b>
<b>Permanent Bookings*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full payment in week 1 of term</li><li>• Half payment in weeks 1 and 6 of term</li></ul>
<b>Casual Bookings*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full payment on/before booking</li></ul>
<b>Vacation Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paid in full on acceptance of enrolment</li></ul>

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\* All term fees need to be completely paid before a Vacation Care booking will be confirmed. Fees are to be paid for every day the child is booked at the centre. This includes when the child is absent unless written notice (including email) is provided 2 weeks in advance.

A dated receipt will be provided for each payment.

### **Child Care Benefit and Rebate**

The centre is approved to offer CCB & CCR to eligible families for Before and After School Care and Vacation Care. Parents will be asked for all relevant Family Assistance details on enrolment. These details include: customer reference numbers for each child and parent and dates of birth. This will not be backdated.

Child care Benefit is paid for thirty sick days a year.

### **Overdue Fees**

Parents are encouraged to discuss any difficulties regarding payment of fees with the Coordinator. From this discussion, suitable arrangements for payment will be considered.

Otherwise, one (1) week after the fees are due, an overdue reminder statement regarding will be sent. Two (2) weeks after the fees are due, another reminder statement will be sent. This second statement will include an administration fee of 20% of the total amount owed and a reminder that their child's position could be cancelled if the term fees are not paid. After 3 weeks, the centre will call the parents to arrange a meeting with a committee member. The purpose of this meeting will be to settle the account.

If the above procedures do not resolve the overdue fees, the child's placement will be cancelled until the outstanding fees are paid in full.

### **Late Pick-up Fee**

The parent committee will set a late pick up fee annually. Any parent who collects their child/ren after the centre has closed (6:30pm during the term; 6pm during vacation care), will be charged the current fee

Wherever possible, parents who are running late should advise the centre regarding the time they are to pick up their child. The coordinator will discuss alternate options for parents who regularly collect their child/ren after closing, If no other alternative is reached, the child may lose their position

### **Dropping off and Picking up**

#### **Dropping Off**

Children may be left at the centre anytime within the centre hours of operations and no time before.

On arrival, the parent responsible for the child is to sign the child in. This includes:

- Indicating the time the child was dropped off
- Signing next to the child/ren's name

- Communicating changes in arrangements/needs
- Ensuring that a staff member is aware of the child/ren's presence

### **Picking up**

Children must be collected by the closing time of the centre (6:30pm during the term; 6pm during vacation care).

The authorised person who is collecting the child must sign the child out. This includes:

- Indicating the time of departure
- Signing next to the child/ren's name
- Collecting all of their child/ren's belongings
- Letting a staff member know that they are taking the child

The centre is to be notified if the person collecting the child is to be later than usual. This helps to ensure the child continues to feel comfortable and safe.

Parents must inform the centre if the child is to be picked up by someone other than those specified on the enrolment form and provide details of their identity. The person picking up the child/ren will be asked to produce identification. The centre will not release any child to an unauthorised person.

If an unauthorised person comes to collect the child, the centre will ring the parent to get their authorisation. The child will not be released until proper authorisation has been received.

Parents will inform the centre and give permission regarding their child/ren's extra-curricular activities on school grounds. This is to be done at the beginning of each term or at the commencement of a new activity. It will be the responsibility of the parents to notify staff of all changes.

Children will only leave the centre unaccompanied to attend an activity on school grounds with the permission of parents and staff.

All staff will be made aware of children's extra-curricular activities and will endeavour to ensure children leave the centre at the correct time. It is responsibility of the child to remind staff of their activity and time. We believe this will help all children's time management and self help skills.

### **Absent Children**

Parents/Guardians are to advise the centre if their child will be absent on a booked days

Parents are to fill out an absentee note.

Should a child not be present the staff member will:

1. Consult with and alert other another staff member to the situation
2. Ask the other children present whether they know where the child might be
3. Look in these areas where the child might be while ensuring adequate supervision is maintained.

4. Approach the school office and ask for information regarding the child's attendance at school.
5. Contact parent/authorised person to inform them of their child's absence and find out any further information that may lead to discovering the child's whereabouts.

### **Participation and Access**

We aim to provide a caring and supportive environment where children, parents and staff feel welcome and valued. Staff will interact with parents in order to communicate:

- information regarding their child
- relevant issues
- information relating to the running of the centre
- the activities at the centre
- ways of using the parent's knowledge and skills at the centre
- input and feedback regarding the program, policies or daily running of the centre

Parents need to be aware of the staff's requirement to supervise the children. An appointment can be made to discuss any issues in depth.

### **Complaints Procedures**

WASC values effective communication between all stakeholders at the centre. The centre supports a parent's right to complain and will ensure that the complaint is fully and clearly before it is resolved. All confidential conversations will take place in a quiet place away from children, other parents and other staff not involved.

If the complaint is not handled to the parent's satisfaction, they should raise the issue, verbally or in writing, with a member of The Parent Committee. The committee member will then discuss it with the Parent Committee and the Coordinator. They will develop a strategy to resolve the problem; this may involve a further meeting with the parent if necessary or a reply in writing. All parent's complaints are to be recorded and dated, indicating the issue of concern and how it was resolved.

Once a complaint has been resolved staff will be informed of any relevant issues that they need to address or be aware of as the result of a parent's complaint.

### **Role of the Parent Committee**

The committee will ensure that the centre is managed according to the funding body requirements including adhering to all relevant guidelines, acts, regulations and the constitution.

Office bearers will be elected each year at the Annual General Meeting. All parents will be encouraged to actively participate. Roles for each member elected will be clearly defined including duties and responsibilities.

Members of the committee will be parents of children who attend the centre and interested community members.

Decisions about the overall operation of the centre will be made by the parent committee.

General ongoing tasks of the committee include:

1. Ensuring the needs of the parents, children and staff are met.
2. Developing and revising policies and guidelines to ensure the smooth daily operation of the centre.
3. Communication of relevant issues to parents and staff.
4. Financial management and administration.
5. Liaison and compliance with funding and licensing bodies.
6. Employment, supervision and direction of staff, ensuring application of appropriate industrial awards.
7. Continued maintenance and repair of the building and equipment.

All parents and staff will be kept informed about meetings and have opportunities to add to the agenda. Minutes from the meetings will be available to all parents and staff.

### **Indoor Environment**

We aim to provide a comfortable and safe indoor environment that allows flexibility and access to a variety of activities ranging from board games, blocks, creative crafts, cooking or group and individual activities.

Separate areas inside will be provided for:

1. Parents to sign their child in/out of the centre
2. Staff to collect fees, answer phones and maintain records and documents.
3. Storage of equipment, craft supplies, dangerous materials.
4. Preparation and storage of food and drinks
5. Display of children's activities and work.
6. Creative and other activities in groups or individual.
7. Quiet space for children to retreat to or do homework.

The centre's indoor environment is smoke free.

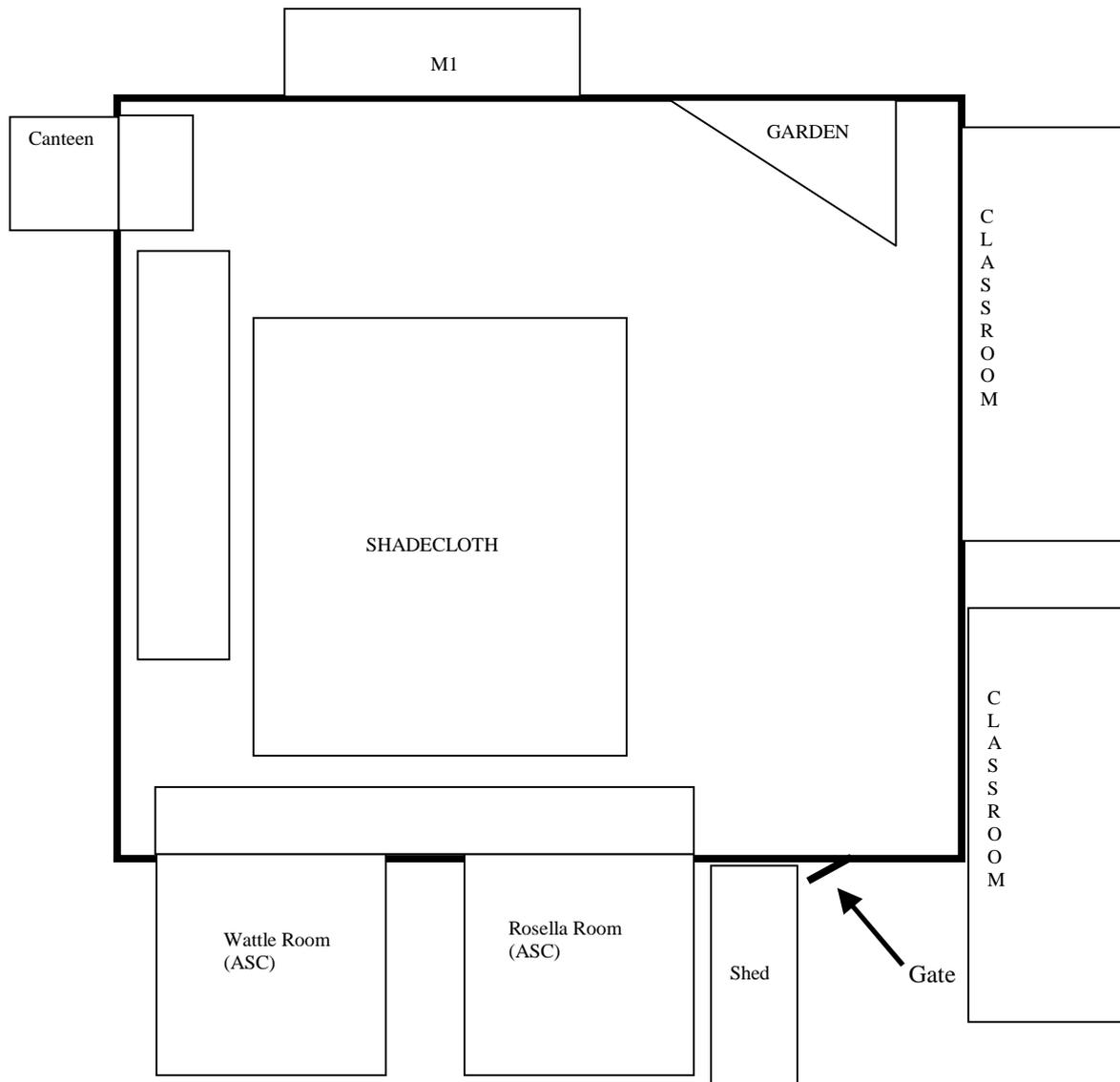
### **Outdoor Environment**

We aim to provide a safe and secure outdoor environment where all children have the opportunity to explore their physical abilities through play, activities, games and sport.

Areas will be made available where children can play in large or small groups or by themselves. Supervision will be properly maintained. Children are only to play in the areas that are clearly visible to the staff and where proper child/staff ratios are maintained. Clear boundaries shall be set and enforced. (See diagram on the next page)

The outdoor environment is smoke free.

The wearing of appropriate clothing including hats, collared T- shirts and enclosed shoes will be encouraged. Sunscreen will be made available for all children and staff. Play areas will be guided by our Sun Protection Guideline.



**Sun Protection** ——— Boundary of outdoor area

Our sun protection policy is followed from the beginning of September until the end of April.  
 Our sun protection strategies include:

1. A shade structure in the outside areas
2. Appropriate clothing
3. Hats
4. Sunscreen
5. Role Modeling by staff
6. Education regarding the effects of the sun
7. Communication regarding sun protection guidelines
8. Regular Review of guidelines

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### **Child Management**

Our aim is to ensure all children, parents and staff utilising the centre feel safe at all times. We aim to maintain a positive environment by establishing clear guidelines outlining general rules and safety issues, whilst encouraging positive behaviour and respect for others. Staff will promote self discipline skills for children through direction and example, whilst facilitating parent involvement and awareness as required. Parents will be encouraged to reinforce self discipline skills with their child/ren.

Basic rules and clear guidelines of acceptable behaviour will be established through consultation with the staff, parents and children. These rules will be displayed at the centre to ensure parents and children are aware of them. These rules encourage respect for the rights of others and help create a caring environment.

Staff will explain the consequences of breaking the rules to the children. All consequences will be relevant to the individual situation and not demeaning to the child. Staff will only use time out for short periods. During this time, children are encouraged to sit and think about why they are in time out. Staff will follow up all time out situations by discussing the situation with the child and working together on better solutions for the future.

### **Occupational Health and Safety**

Wahroonga After School Care Centre Inc is committed to ensuring the highest level of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare.

Staff, parents, children, practical students, visitors and contractors are expected to comply with the safety standards of the centre.

The centre is a smoke free environment. .

### **Child Protection Guidelines**

The wellbeing of the children in our care at Wahroonga After School Care Inc. is of paramount importance. When providing care to the children, we assume responsibility for them. We are required to provide a safe environment where the children are protected from all forms of harm and danger. This includes any action which might cause any detrimental effect of a physical, psychological or emotional nature and all forms exploitation and harm.

We believe that children have the right to care and protection. As such we have an obligation and desire to ensure and defend the wellbeing and safety of all children. We have a responsibility, mandated by law, to adopt procedures which cover all aspects of child safety. We are mandatory reporters.

We aim to provide a safe and protected environment for the children at the centre.  
We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children, families, staff and visitors.  
We are committed to developing and implementing procedures for managing child safety.

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Staff will treat all children with respect and understanding at all times. We support the rights and wellbeing of staff and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure and safe environment for all children.

Staff will undergo training in relation to child protection and reporting as part of the training budget.

### **Cultural Relevance and Anti- Bias**

We recognise that there are a diverse range of cultures in Australia. We aim to foster an awareness and acceptance of other cultures through the thoughtful integration of a variety of cultural activities in the program. Children will be encouraged to explore and share a range of cultural activities and experiences in an environment free from racial or gender prejudice and harassment.

### **Planning and Evaluation of Written Programs**

**Evaluation:** A way of determining whether the program is meeting the needs of all the children and if the program is reflecting the centre's philosophy.

**Reflection:** a way of critically thinking about, assessing and evaluating daily practices.

Documenting information about children, their interests, beliefs, questions, discoveries and ideas, assists staff to plan routines, transitions and play and learning experiences. This information combined with the knowledge of child development, builds a holistic view of children.

We aim to develop and implement a balanced program that is stimulating, interesting and exciting. The program allows and encourages opportunities for children to play, explore and develop new skills. This is crucial to the developmental and leisure needs of our children. The program will reflect the cultural diversity of today's society.

The program will reflect the philosophy of the centre and aim to meet the social, physical, intellectual, recreational, creative and emotional development needs of all children attending the centre. Staff will interact with the children and encouraged them to try new experiences. Staff will be positive role models and help teach appropriate behaviours and practices.

The program will be evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure it is meeting the needs of individual children and families. Wahroonga After School Care Inc values collaboration and consultation during the programming process.

### **Staff to Child Ratio Guidelines**

The current Australian standards are:

- 1 staff member to every 15 children at the centre.
- 1 staff member to 8 children on excursions.
- 1 staff member to 5 children in or around water.

There will be a minimum of 2 staff present at the times.

### **Food and Nutrition**

Food will be provided for breakfast (2 pieces of toast or equivalent) and afternoon tea (fruit and sandwiches or equivalent). There will be fresh drinking water available at all times to staff and children.

### **Illness and Infectious Diseases**

A child or adult will be considered sick if she/ he:

- Is lethargic or sleeps at unusual times
- Has a fever over 38°C
- Is crying from discomfort
- Vomits or has diarrhea
- Exhibits any other signs or symptoms which raise concern including weeping sores.

If a child is unwell, parents are asked not to bring them to the centre.

If the child is assessed to be unwell on arrival at the centre, they will not be accepted for attendance at that time.

If a child becomes unwell at the centre, the child's parents will be contacted and asked to arrange for the child to be picked up as soon as possible. Children and staff with diarrhea will be excluded until 24 hours after the symptoms have disappeared.

### **Anaphylaxis Guidelines**

Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of allergic reaction and is potentially life threatening.

Anaphylaxis reactions can result from

- Food allergies
- Insect stings
- Medication

Common food triggers include peanuts, nuts, eggs, milk, soy, sesame and shellfish. Even traces of these foods can cause severe anaphylactic reactions.

Anaphylactic shock is a medical emergency that requires immediate treatment with adrenalin (epipen), which should be carried at all times, and emergency medical attention.

Parents/ Guardians are required to:

- List all medical history and current treatment on enrolment forms.
- Ensure their child does not bring known triggers to the centre

Staff will:

- Eliminate food allergens being served at the centre by careful purchasing of products.
- Staff will receive training on anaphylactic reactions; the symptoms, how to administer epipens and how to follow the emergency response plan.

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### **Medication Guidelines**

Parents who require medication to be administered to their child at the centre will need to complete a medication administration form. Medication must be given directly to staff and not left in the child's bag. Parents and staff are to ensure the details on the form are clear and clarify any questions. Staff will store medication in the designed secure place.

Medication will only be administered from its original packaging and by authorised staff who will verify the correct dosage with another staff member.

### **Asthma Guidelines**

Many different irritants, acting alone or in combination, can trigger asthma symptoms. These can include:

- Allergens (house dust mites, pollens, animal fur)
- Exercise
- Viral infections
- Weather changes
- Exposure to tobacco smoke

Parents/Guardians are required to list all medical history and current treatment, including any prophylactic medications, on enrolment forms. They have a responsibility to notify the centre, in writing, of any changes that occur during the year.

Parents/Guardians should complete an asthma management record and it is their responsibility to update these as changes occur. If a child requires asthma medication on a regular basis it is the parent's responsibility to supply the required medication and inform the centre of the correct dosage.

### **First Aid Guidelines**

Our first aid equipment is always available to all staff and children in the centre and whilst on excursions. All staff will be encouraged to undertake first aid training as part of their conditions of employment. This will ensure the safety and administration of first aid remains at a high standard.

### **Head Lice Guidelines**

To maintain a hygienic environment the centre will encourage the children and staff to:

- Not share hats
- Tie back long hair
- Clean and disinfect all hair ties, bands and brushes used in activities
- Have their hair checked on a regular basis.