

Vacation Care Policies and Procedures Guidelines



City of Ryde

November 2003

ENGLISH

If you do not understand this document please come to Ryde Civic Centre, 1 Devlin Street, Ryde Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm or telephone the Telephone and Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask an interpreter to contact the City of Ryde for you on 9952 8222.

ARABIC

إذا تعذر عليك فهم محتويات هذه الوثيقة، نرجو الحضور إلى مركز بلدية رايد Ryde Civic Centre على العنوان: Devlin Street, Ryde 1 من الاثنين إلى الجمعة بين الساعة 8.30 صباحاً والساعة 4.30 بعد الظهر، أو الاتصال بمكتب خدمات الترجمة على الرقم 131 450 لكي تطلب من أحد المترجمين الاتصال بمجلس مدينة رايد، على الرقم 9952 8222، نيابةً عنك.

ARMENIAN

Եթէ այս գրութիւնը չէք հասկնար, խնդրեմ եկէք՝ Րայըր Սիվիք Սենթըր, 1 Տելվին փողոց, Րայըր, (Ryde Civic Centre, 1 Delvin Street, Ryde) Երկուշաբթիէն Ուրբաթ կ.ա. ժամը 8.30 – կ.ե. ժամը 4.30, կամ հեռաձայնեցէք Հեռաձայնի եւ Թարգմանութեան Ապասարկութեան՝ 131 450, եւ խնդրեցէք որ թարգմանիչ մը Րայըր Քաղաքապետարանին հետ կապ հաստատէ ձեզի համար, հեռաձայնելով՝ 9952 8222 թիվին:

CHINESE

如果您看不懂本文，請在周一至周五上午 8 時 30 分至下午 4 時 30 分前往 Ryde 市政中心詢問 (Ryde Civic Centre, 地址: 1 Devlin Street, Ryde)。你也可以打電話至電話傳譯服務中心，電話號碼是: 131 450。接通後你可以要求一位傳譯員為你打如下電話和 Ryde 市政廳聯繫，電話是: 9952 8222。

FARSI

اگر این مدرک را نمی فهمید لطفاً از 8.30 صبح تا 4.30 بعد از ظهر دوشنبه تا جمعه به مرکز شهرداری رايد، Ryde Civic Centre, 1 Devlin Street, Ryde مراجعه کنید یا به سرویس مترجم تلفنی، شماره 131 450 تلفن بزنید و از یک مترجم بخواهید که از طرف شما با شهرداری رايد، شماره 9952 8222 تلفن بزند.

ITALIAN

Se non capite il presente documento, siete pregati di rivolgervi al Ryde Civic Centre al n. 1 di Devlin Street, Ryde, dalle 8.30 alle 16.30, dal lunedì al venerdì; oppure potete chiamare il Telephone Translating and Interpreting Service al 131 450 e chiedere all'interprete di contattare a vostro nome il Municipio di Ryde presso il 9952 8222.

KOREAN

이 문서가 무슨 의미인지 모르실 경우에는 1 Devlin Street, Ryde 에 있는 Ryde Civic Centre 로 오시거나 (월 – 금, 오전 8:30 – 오후 4:30), 전화 131 450 번으로 전화 통역 서비스에 연락하셔서 통역사에게 여러분 대신 Ryde 시청에 전화 9952 8222 번으로 연락을 부탁드립니다.

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SECTION A: ADMINISTRATION

HOURS OF OPERATION

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to meet the needs of the parents in our local community who either work, study or have other commitments, by operating during times that allow them to reasonably get to and from work or place of study.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards, section 4.3 (Hours of operation)
- Funding agreement

PROCEDURE

- The Centres will operate during government school holidays between the hours of:
 - 7:30am –6:00pm at Truscott Street and West Ryde Public Schools
 - 8:00am –6:00pm at Gladesville Public School
- The centre will close on designated government school pupil free days.
- The centre will close on designated public holidays.
- All parents will be notified of days of closure through our brochure which is distributed approximately one month prior to the Vacation Care period.
- No children are to be left unattended at the centre outside these hours.
- Please refer to dropping off and collection and late collection policy (Section A page 8) for further information regarding these procedures.

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SERVICE ACCESS

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide places for school aged children needing care during their time out of school hours. We will not discriminate against any families needing care however, priority of access will be determined by Government guidelines.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 4.6 (Access)
- 'Priority of access' guidelines from Funding Bodies

PROCEDURE

- Our centre will be available for children who currently attend primary school only.
- No one will be discriminated against on the basis of his or her cultural background, religion, sex, disability, marital status or income.
- The centre will try to meet any specific needs of the families in the local community.
- The centre will ensure that access to children and families with special needs are catered for.

Under agreement with the Commonwealth Government the main priority for a place in the centre will be given to:

- Working parents
- Parents seeking work
- Parents studying for work purposes.
- Other places will be available if not filled by the above priorities.
- Children with Special Needs
- Children with special needs are encouraged to attend the program.
- Consideration of the services ability to cater for the specific needs of the child are necessary before the child can be accepted in the program.

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- A child whose needs can be met within the 1:15 staff to child ratio may be enrolled following the standard process for enrolment however at least 2 weeks notice must be provided. A “Special Needs Profile Form” must be completed to provide staff with detailed information regarding the child's needs and behaviour.
- A child whose needs cannot be met within the standard 1:15 ratio may be integrated into the centre at a ratio of 1:6, dependent on the child’s individual needs. To ascertain whether the service can accommodate the child, an initial observation may be conducted at the centre. Consultation between staff, parent and a representative from the Children’s Services Resource and Support Program (SUPS) will ascertain the child’s eligibility to participate in the program.
- Should a child whose needs cannot be met with the current resources at the centre however it is foreseen that additional support could accommodate the child an application for SNSS (Special Needs Subsidy Scheme) can be made. Approval and funding for assistance under this Scheme requires early consultation with the parent to enable formation of an Inclusion Support Team and development of an Inclusion Support Plan before commencement of care.
- It is a requirement of parents with children with special needs to inform the Co-ordinator at the time of enrolment of the expected drop off and pick up time of their child each day to enable appropriate staff rostering.
- A child whose needs cannot be met effectively with current resources or with funding assistance in the program may not be accepted. After consultation and an observation of the child, the parent, staff and SUPS, the parent will be notified in writing should access to the service be unavailable.

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Enrolment

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide an efficient enrolment procedure that is clear and understandable to all in the local community. We will ensure the confidentiality of our families through provision of secure recording and storage procedures.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 4.6 (Access)
- National Standards Section 5.3 (Maintenance of records)
- Family Law Act
- Privacy Act

PROCEDURE

- An enrolment form must be completed for each family before a child can attend the centre and be received by Council prior to or on the closing date. Payment must be received in advance of care being provided.
- Late enrolments will not be accepted. If a parent has reason to appeal this decision due to emergency circumstances, the parent has the option of raising the issue with the Vacation Care Co-ordinator.
- Should a parent wish to transfer days already booked in, this request must be made in writing and providing at least 48 hours notice.
- Parents of children with special needs who require additional support should provide staff at the centre with notice of a cancellation by 6.00pm on the day before the enrolment.
- Enrolment forms must contain all relevant details relating to personal, medical and custodial details for each child, parent or guardian and emergency contacts along with any special requirements relating to that child.
- If a child is subject to an access order or agreement, the service must have a copy on record plus any subsequent alteration registered by the court.
- Evidence of court orders or agreements will be considered part of the enrolment in order to minimise the likelihood of distressing situations occurring in the future.

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- All enrolment forms are to be kept in a locked file and kept confidential from all but the approved persons who enrolled the child, relevant staff, management and Commonwealth and /or State Department Officers.
- Enrolment forms are to be completed for every vacation care period.
- Parents will be advised that it is their responsibility to notify staff of any changes to their current details on enrolment.
- Any requests for changes or cancellations of any booking details must be in writing by fax or email and forwarded to the Vacation Care Co-ordinator. Email is not accepted.
- All excursions have limited vacancies. All vacancies may be filled prior to the closing date. If during the initial enrolment process a child does not obtain a place on a given excursion, parents can question centre staff on the day of an excursion as to whether any vacancies have arisen. If a vacancy has arisen due to illness or absence of another child a replacement child will be allowed to attend. Parents must complete the Excursion Replacement Form which is available at the centre.

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FEES

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide a quality service that is affordable and accessible to families of diverse economic status. A schedule of current fees is available on request and is available on current enrolment forms.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Child Care Benefit (CCB)
- Confidentiality and maintenance of records

PROCEDURE

Setting fees

- Fees are to be determined according to market prices, based on the annual budget and ensuring that the required income will be received to run the service efficiently.
- Fees will be reviewed based on attendance and the Centre's ability to meet the running costs. Parents will be given at least 4 weeks notice of any changes in fees.

Fee payment

- Fee payments are to be finalised prior to the child's attendance at the centre.
- Seven days prior notice in writing is to be given to the Co-ordinator for any changes to the days of care or cancellation of care. If seven days written notice is not given fees will not be refunded. Additional days of care and excursion enrolments (if a vacancy exists) will require 48 hours notice.
- Fees can be paid at the Customer Service Desk, City of Ryde, Civic Centre, 1 Devlin Street, Ryde up to four weeks prior to the vacation care period. Mail payments must be addressed to the "City of Ryde", Locked Bag 2069, North Ryde 1670. Cheques should be made payable to the "City of Ryde".

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- A dated receipt will be provided for each payment. Enrolments are generally not received after the closing date, except in the event of an emergency and subject to availability. If an enrolment is received after the closing date due to extreme circumstances a late fee per booking will apply.
- The Centre is approved to offer Child Care Benefit (CCB) to eligible families. This can be provided in the form of reduced fees or through the family's tax return at the completion of the financial year. The instruction in the Handbook provided by the Department of Family and Community Services (DFaCS) should be followed. Parents and carers should receive all necessary documents and be informed of how to make their application to the Family Assistance Office (FAO).
- Families cannot receive CCB fee reductions until assessments are completed and received. Assessment notices must list the Centre/s the family will be using. Assessment notices relating to other services will not be accepted.
- Please note the following Carer Reference Numbers (CRN) when corresponding with the Family Assistance Office:
 - Gladesville Vacation Care 555 010 247L
 - Truscott Street Vacation Care 555 010 246T
 - West Ryde Vacation Care 555 010 245X
- All documentation pertaining to CCB will be kept for the specified time and made available to Commonwealth Departmental Officers on request.

Late fees

- Any parent who collects their child/ren after 6pm will be charged a late fee.
- Parents should advise the Centre when they will be late to collect their child.
- If a parent continues to collect their child after 6pm, the Co-ordinator will need to discuss alternative options with them, and suitable arrangements made or the child's place in the centre may be cancelled.

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DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide a procedure for dropping off and picking up children which is clear and ensures the safety and well being of the children in our care. Parents are required to follow specific communication procedures to ensure we can provide appropriate care of their children.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 5.3 (Maintenance of records)
- Custodial requirements

PROCEDURE

Dropping off

- Children are not to be left unattended at the centre at any time prior to the opening hours of the Centre.
- On arrival, the carer dropping off the child is responsible to sign the child in on the sign-in sheet next to the child's name, indicating time of arrival and an emergency contact number
- Children are to place their belongings in the designated area.
- The carer dropping off the child must ensure that a staff member is aware of the child's presence before leaving the centre, and that any special needs of the child are communicated.
- Should a child require medication of any kind, parents must fill in and sign the medication record (see Medication Policy and Network's Guidelines for Adminstrating Medication).

Picking up

- Children must be collected by the closing time of 6pm.
- The authorised carer collecting the child must sign the sign-out sheet next to the child's name, indicating time of departure.
- Children who have written permission to leave the centre by themselves will be signed out by staff at the appropriate time.
- The authorised carer and child/ren are to ensure that all belongings are collected.

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- The authorised carer must ensure that a staff member is aware that they are taking the child from the Centre.
- Staff are to be notified if the carer collecting the child is to be later than usual. The child will be notified to avoid any anxiety.
- If the child is to be collected by anyone different to the name on the enrolment form, parents must personally inform the appropriate staff member prior to pick up. This change should be confirmed in writing and the person picking up the child shall be asked to bring identification.
- The names and contact numbers of all carers authorised to collect the child must be included on the enrolment form. Any changes to these must be advised in writing to the Centre or Co-ordinator as soon as possible.
- The authorised person is required to give proof of identification to staff if they have not seen them previously.
- The Centre will not release the child to anyone who is not authorised by the parent to collect the child in line with centre policy.
- If there is an emergency and the parent or an authorised person cannot collect the child, the parent must personally ring the centre to advise them. The parent will be required to indicate who will collect the child, give a description and ask the person to provide the centre with proof of identity eg. drivers licence or Medicare card.
- If the centre has not been notified and someone other than the parent or authorised person comes to collect the child, the centre will ring the parent to get his or her authorisation. The child will not be released from the Centre until proper authorisation has been received.
- Parents who have not used the service or are unfamiliar to staff may be requested to show identification upon collection of their child/ren.
- Parents will be charged a fee of \$1.00 per minute for collection of their child after the centre closure time of 6.00pm.
- If a child has not been collected by 6.30pm and staff have not been notified of the parent's whereabouts and estimated time of arrival, staff will contact the local police.

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ABSENT AND MISSING CHILDREN

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to ensure the safety and welfare of the children by ensuring clear communication and co-operation between the Centre, parents and the school.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 5.3.4 (advising of child's absence)

PROCEDURE

Absent Children

- Parents/guardians are to advise the centre if their child will be absent on a day when they are booked into care. To receive a full refund, parents must provide seven days written notification.

If parents have prior awareness they must:

- Inform a staff member in person who must record the information on the roll and sign in/out sheet.

If parents do not know until the day they must:

- Ring the centre and inform a staff member, as early as possible. This information must be recorded on the roll/sign in/out sheet.
- If a child misses a session/s of care due to illness, a refund may be provided if a written request is provided with supporting medical documents. Written requests for refunds due to illness must be received within 5 working days of the child's absence.

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MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

POLICY STATEMENT

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards, Section 5.3 (Maintenance of records/confidentiality)
- Funding Agreement
- Child Care Benefit
- Accident records, Insurance requirements
- Child Care And Protection Act
- Privacy Act

PROCEDURE

- Staff and management will ensure that all required records are obtained, maintained, updated and kept in the nominated secure place.
- All records are to be kept confidential and only made available to authorised persons.
- All documents relating to children and carers will only be made available to the parent/guardian or approved persons enrolling the child, staff and authorised members of Council who require relevant information, or Commonwealth or State Government officers when requested.
- All documents relating to staff will only be made available to the individual staff member, the Co-ordinator, and police if required.
- All documents relating to fee payment and CCB will only be made available to the parent/guardian or approved persons enrolling the child, staff and appropriate Council staff or Commonwealth Government offices.
- No member of staff may give information on matters relating to children, to anyone, other than to the customer who has completed and provided signatory on the enrolment form.

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Exceptions are made:

- for normal information exchange among staff and management for the daily operation of the centre and wellbeing of the staff and children.
- if required to do so in a court of law when subpoenaed or for any other purpose required or authorised by law
- if the welfare of the child is at risk the appropriate government agencies may be contacted.
- No member of staff may give information on matters relating to staff to anyone except in normal information exchange among staff and management for the daily operation of the centre and wellbeing of the staff and children, or when required to do so by law.

RECORDS TO BE KEPT WILL BE

In relation to daily operations:

- Full enrolment forms containing information as required under section 5.3.1 of the National Standards, to be kept in alphabetical order.
- Daily records of attendance including a roll taken by the staff and the sign in/out sheet recording the time of arrival and departure.
- Communication book recording specific information that the staff need to be aware of, to fully cater for the children in their care.
- Accident/illness record book containing nature of accident or illness, who attended the child and what course of action was taken.
Note - Accident and illness records will be kept until the child turns 24.
- Medication Records containing parent's requirements and signature, medication used, the date, time and dosage of administration, the person who administered it, and the person who witnessed the administration.
- Written program indicating daily activities in the Centre.

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In relation to fees

- Child Care Benefit (CCB) records will be kept for a period of 3 years.
- Amount owing records indicating fees due, and any outstanding fees, along with procedures undertaken to retrieve outstanding fees.
- Accounting documents and all records relating to fees accounting and bank statements are to be kept for a period of 7 years.

In relation to staff

- Staff employment details indicating personal details, date of employment, hours of work, position title and job description, resume and references, date for review, and any discipline or grievance procedures.
- Staff wages, holiday and sick leave entitlements.
- Time and wage records are to be kept for a period of 7 years.
- Union and Superannuation details
- Occupational Health and Safety details

In relation to management

- Management structure including position titles and duties and current persons holding the positions.
- Policy booklet including centre details, philosophy and policies.
- Insurance and financial details
- Insurance documents will be kept for a period of 7 years.
- Funding and other relevant agreements such as school/hall usage etc.
- All records relating to funding will be kept for a period of 7 years.
- All records are to be kept neat and tidy, updated as required and appropriate information passed on to any new staff or management member.
- All records, which require to be kept for an extended period of time, will be stored securely in the designated place and shall not be removed without the knowledge of the management and only to those who are legally required to obtain the information.

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POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide effective management and a quality service through the ongoing development and review of policies, which are required to run the service efficiently.

Council will ensure that all individuals are aware of relevant policies and have free access to the policy booklet.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards, Section 4.1 (Policy)

PROCEDURE

- Council will ensure the development of all required policies under the National Standards.
- Other policies are to be developed as deemed necessary by Council.

This will be based on the following criteria:

- an issue or problem arises that is not addressed in a current policy
- a current policy is not meeting the current need
- daily operations of the centre are unclear to staff, parents or Council
- staff, parents or Council are unsure what to do in a certain situation
- there have been changes due to outside influences
- Any persons involved in the Centre are to feel welcome to make suggestions and discuss any concerns they may have regarding current policies.
- Policies will be reviewed on an annual basis and more frequently if the need arises.
- Any changes to existing policies will be circulated through enrolment forms and adjusted accordingly on the City of Ryde website.

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PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS

POLICY STATEMENT

We believe that participation by parents/guardians/approved persons in issues relating to their children is important. We aim to provide a caring and supportive environment where everyone feels welcomed and valued. Involvement of parents in activities will be actively sought and open communication constantly maintained.

Parents are encouraged to be involved in issues that relate to them and their children, through participation and discussion of all issues relevant to the running of the Centre.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 5.1 (Participation and access)
- Family Law Act

PROCEDURE

- Staff will greet and farewell parents on arrival and departure and communicate with parents in a positive and supportive manner, making the parents feel welcome
- Staff will establish a pattern of exchange of information, communicating to parents about their child or what they did on that day that may be of interest to them.
- Staff will accept individual differences in the way parents bring up their children.
- Parents will be informed of all relevant issues in the centre through direct contact, notice boards, or the quarterly brochure, website and newsletter.
- Parents need to be aware of the staff's requirement to supervise the children during the activity sessions. If parents wish to discuss or exchange detailed information about their child or the Centre with the Co-ordinator or another staff member, an appointed time suitable to both should be organised.

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Access by Non-custodial Parent

- If a child is subject to an access order or agreement, the service must have a copy on record plus any subsequent alteration registered by the court.
- Evidence of court orders or agreements will be considered part of the enrolment in order to minimise the likelihood of distressing situations occurring in the future.

When a non-custodial parent attempts to collect a child from the Centre the staff will:

- Be polite, firm and clear and remember their primary duty is to the children in care.
- Clarify the legal position with the non-custodial parent. For example staff may say,
‘I’m sorry but I’m not legally able to allow the child to leave with you without the permission of the custodial parent.’
- Ask the person politely to leave. If they refuse to leave, staff will call the police.
- In all cases staff should be immediately aware of any unfamiliar person on the premises and find out what they want as quickly as possible.

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COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

POLICY STATEMENT

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, staff, management, programs or policies without fearing negative consequences, and that they are made fully aware of the procedures to do this. Our priority is to do everything possible to improve the quality of our service.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Community Services Complaints, Appeals and Monitoring Act, 1994.

PROCEDURE

- We will support parents right to complain and will help them to make their complaints clear and try to resolve them.
- A complaint can be informal or formal. It can be anything which a parent thinks is unfair or which makes them unhappy with the service.
- All confidential conversations with parents will take place in a quiet place away from children, other parents or staff not involved.
- If a parent has a complaint or comment about the service, they will be encouraged to talk to the Team Leader of the relevant Centre
- The parents complaint is to be recorded and dated indicating the issue of concern and how it was resolved.
- The Team Leader will inform the parents of what has been decided regarding the issue. Staff will also be informed of any relevant issues that they need to address or be aware of. This could be done verbally or if the issue has been dealt with on a more formal basis a delegated authority will write personally to the parent.

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SECTION B: FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

SECURITY

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to ensure the proper security of the building and staff by ensuring measures are in place regarding entry and access to the Centres.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Occupational Health and Safety Act

PROCEDURE

- Only approved staff will be given a key to access the building and equipment areas.
- Extra keys will only be cut after agreement by the school and a record made of where they are kept.
- A cash box will be provided to keep all petty cash and important documents. Access to the cash box will only be permitted by approved staff.
- Staff will not open the cash box in clear view of anyone.
- Staff will ensure that the building is left in a secure manner before leaving.
- Staff must ensure that all windows are locked; cupboards, safe, and other relevant areas are locked, all heating and lighting is off and all doors properly secured.
- Staff will inform the police and the school as soon as possible if there has been a break in or vandalism of the Centre of any kind.
- Staff will remain at the Centre until the police arrive or inform them of what to do.

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BUILDING EQUIPMENT REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide a safe and secure environment through proper and immediate attention to all aspects of building and equipment repairs and maintenance.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 2.9 (Building cleanliness, maintenance and repairs).
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Australian Standards for playground equipment

PROCEDURE

- Equipment will be chosen to meet the children's developmental needs and interests.
- Buildings and all equipment will be maintained in a safe, clean condition and in good repair at all times.
- There must be no damaged plugs, sockets, power cords or extension cords.
- All plug sockets shall be maintained as child safe.
- Electrical appliances shall be in good working order.
- Electrical circuit breakers will be installed and maintained.
- The centre and equipment will be regularly checked to ensure that they are in a good and safe condition, comply with relevant Australian Standards and have appropriate soft-fall surfacing maintained.
- Equipment will be regularly washed and cleaned.
- Recycled craft materials should be checked for potential hazards.
- Parents will be encouraged to notify the staff of any problems that they might observe.
- Anything that requires maintenance is to be reported to the Co-ordinator as soon as possible.
- Faulty equipment should be removed or protection placed around any dangerous building sites.

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- For urgent repairs the Co-ordinator will organise a contractor/repair person to attend to the problem.
- Should the centre be considered unsafe or as being a health risk, then the Centre will be closed, after notice has been given to all relevant parties, until the problem has been rectified.

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STORAGE

POLICY STATEMENT

The centre will provide safe and secure storage facilities for all indoor and outdoor equipment, ensuring relevant equipment is accessible to the children to encourage independence. Dangerous objects and all confidential records should be made inaccessible to children and all persons except those permitted to access them.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 1.4 (Storage facilities)

PROCEDURE

- A storage system should be devised that ensures easy access and uncluttered storage of all equipment.
- Play equipment will be stored in a storage box. This will be accessible to the children during the operating hours of the Centre.
- Children will show respect for the equipment and be expected to pack equipment away that they remove from the storage box.
- All equipment is to be neatly packed away at the end of each session.
- Craft equipment will be stored in a separate storage box, children should ask permission before removing any craft equipment, such as paints and glues etc, not set up by the staff.
- Drawing paper and other materials will be made available to the children at designated times.
- All craft equipment is to be properly washed and cleaned before storage.
- Where room permits, a separate storage area will be available for large outdoor and sporting equipment. A clearly defined system of storage will be recorded in the storage box.
- All items such as cleaning materials, disinfectants, tools, toiletries, first aid equipment, and medications should be stored in the designated secured area which is inaccessible to the children.
- Staff are responsible to ensure that these areas remain secure and do not inadvertently provide access to these items by the children.

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- Staff and management will ensure that all family records are kept in the nominated secure place, ensuring that records are kept confidential and not accessible to others during the course of daily operations.

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HEATING, VENTILATION AND LIGHTING

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide a quality environment by ensuring adequate provision and maintenance of heating, ventilation and lighting in the Centres.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 2.9 (Building cleanliness, maintenance and repairs)

PROCEDURE

- All heating and cooling systems will be of good quality and checked regularly to ensure safety and reliability. Any maintenance of the appliances will be conducted as per the maintenance policy.
- All heating and cooling systems and power cords will be kept in a safe area and away from children.
- The Co-ordinator will take individual needs and specific activities into account when ensuring that heating, ventilation and lighting levels are comfortable.
- Should staff, children or parents complain about heating in the centre not being at a comfortable level, this matter will be drawn to the attention of the school and steps made to address the problem.
- Adequate ventilation will be provided at all times. Windows will be properly maintained to ensure easy opening and screens placed on them for protection from insects.
- Where activities involve toxic materials such as paints and glues, staff are to ensure there is adequate ventilation before undertaking the activity.
- Windows are to be opened during the operation of the Centre except in the case of extreme weather conditions.
- Natural light is considered to be most desirable. Provision of natural light areas will be enhanced as much as possible.
- Suitable outdoor lighting will allow parents, staff and children to enter and exit the building without any unsafe dark areas.

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PEST CONTROL

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide a clean and safe environment by ensuring that every effort is made to maintain a vermin free Centre. We will endeavour to do this with the minimum use of chemicals.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards, Section 2.9 (Building cleanliness, maintenance and repairs)

PROCEDURE

- Equipment and especially food items will be properly stored so as not to attract pests and vermin.
- Refuse bins and disposal areas will be emptied and cleaned daily.
- Kitchen and food preparation areas and storage will be cleaned and maintained daily.
- Should any pests or vermin be identified then action should be taken to rid the centre of the problem by:
 - initially using non-chemical methods such as physical removal, maintaining a clean environment, and use of any non-chemical products.
 - low irritant, environmentally friendly sprays to be used minimally and only with adequate ventilation and preferably not in the presence of the children.
 - other methods such as the employment of a pest control company if deemed necessary by management where the above methods have failed.
 - If urgent the Co-ordinator may obtain a contractor to address the problem.
 - If non urgent the Co-ordinator will bring the problem to the attention of the school who will decide on the appropriate course of action.
- All action will be taken to remove the children, staff and parents from the environment until it is safe and viable.

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INDOOR ENVIRONMENT

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide a comfortable and safe indoor environment that allows flexibility and access to a variety of quiet, active, group and individual activities. We will ensure that only the number of children that can comfortably and legally fit into the Centre space will be enrolled.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 1.1 (Space requirements)
- National Standards Section 2.10 (Health of staff and children)

PROCEDURE

- The centres indoor environment will be smoke free.
- The centre will only enrol the number of children in the centre, that can comfortably fit into the space and in accordance with the National Standards.
- Where children are indoors for long periods together due to weather conditions, special activities will be planned and other areas sought to disperse the group such as school halls and verandas.
- Separate areas in the indoor environment will be provided for:
 - Parents to sign their children in/out of the centre
 - Storage of equipment, food, dangerous materials, and family records
 - Preparation of food and drinks
 - Kitchen and other refuse
 - Cleaning of equipment
 - Male and female toilet, hand basins
 - Creative and other activities
 - Large and small group activities
- The indoor area is to be set up to allow children to participate in a variety of activities with easy access to equipment.
- Staff will ensure that children properly store their bags and that bags and other items are not thrown into walkways or play areas.
- All items obstructing walkways or play areas are to be removed and placed in the correct storage areas.

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- Access for families with disabilities will be maintained ensuring all necessary requirements are considered in the Centre.
- Areas must be set up to ensure that proper supervision can be maintained at all times.
- Access to the outdoor environment should be clear and easily accessible by the children and staff.

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OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide a safe and secure outdoor environment where children have access to a variety of activities, in which children are encouraged to participate.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 1.1 (Space requirements)
- National Standards Section 2.10 (Health of staff and children)

PROCEDURE

- The outdoor environment will be smoke free.
- The outdoor area shall be easily accessible to the staff and children.
- The outdoor space will be inspected daily for any obstacles or dangerous items.
- These items shall be disposed of in a safe and careful manner prior to the children playing in the area.
- Supervision should be properly maintained. Children are only to play in areas that are clearly visible to staff, and where proper child/staff ratios are maintained.
- Clear boundaries shall be set and enforced.
- Adequate shade via trees and coverings will be maintained.
- As far as possible activities will be set up in shaded areas.
- Use of other outdoor venues will be considered where access to the area is safe, adequate supervision can be maintained, the area is considered of value to the children's physical development and personal comfort, and where adequate staff/child ratios can be maintained both indoors and outdoors.

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SECTION C: STAFF POLICIES

RESOURCING

POLICY STATEMENT

(Refer to HR Policy 1/3 Casual Employment)

Casual employment is on a daily as needed basis. The terms and conditions of employment are governed by the Local Government (State) Award. Under the provisions of the Award, a casual employee shall not replace a permanent employee of Council. A casual employee should not be given express or implied expectations of ongoing or regular work.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section, 3.2 (Staff qualifications and training)
- National Standard Section 3.4 (Fit and proper persons)
- National Standard Section 2.5.2 (First aid facilities and qualifications)
- Equal Opportunities Act
- Anti Discrimination Laws
- Prohibited Employment Legislation (Working With Children Check)
- Local Government (State) Award 1997
- Local Government Act 1993
- Industrial Relations Act 1996
- NSW Anti-discrimination Act 1977
- Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act 1975

PROCEDURE

When a position becomes available advertisements will be placed in local universities and colleges. The use of local and regional newspapers will also be considered.

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Advertisements will include:

- job title
- specific employment information
- include that a Working with Children check will be required

Applications in writing should include:

- contact telephone numbers
- resume
- minimum of 2 referees

SELECTION PANEL

- A selection panel will draw up suitable interview questions which relate to all aspects of the position and ensure equal opportunity guidelines are followed. An appropriate time frame (approximately 30 minutes) will be allocated to each interview, with a short break for discussion.
- A nominated person on the selection panel will contact the applicants to determine a date of interview. Each applicant will be asked the same questions with their answers being recorded.

NOTIFICATION

- Applicants will be given the approximate time that they will be contacted regarding their suitability for the position. Successful applicants will be notified in writing and a letter of conformation will be sent requesting acceptance of the position.
- Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.

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CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide a flexible, harmonious working environment that ensures the rights of employees are met at all times. All staff will be employed under the appropriate awards and conditions, taking into consideration Equal Employment Act, Income Tax Assessment Act, Superannuation Act, Industrial Dismissal Act, and Health, Safety and Welfare Act.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Local Government Award

PROCEDURE

- All relevant conditions set down by the award will apply to all employees.
- Staff are encouraged to remain up to date with their appropriate conditions and inform the Co-ordinator of any changes.
- Written staff evaluations will be undertaken after each vacation period. These evaluations will be kept on the employee file and may be viewed upon request at any time.
- Staff are to refrain from using personal mobile phones during shifts with the exception of emergency situations.
- Staff are to be provided with official staff t-shirts and identification tags. Uniforms and tags must be worn at all times.
- All staff will maintain professional behaviour at all times.
- Staff will be paid weekly and will be required to complete a weekly timesheet stating their payroll number, hours worked and description of duties undertaken.

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STAFF INDUCTION

POLICY STATEMENT

Staff induction is an important process in ensuring staff are fully equipped to carry out their duties in the best possible way. An induction process will be developed and carried out for all employees, providing them with a clear understanding about the service and its operations and their expectations within the centre.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Staff Awards and Conditions

PROCEDURE

- The Co-ordinator will conduct the induction process as soon as possible, after the applicant has accepted the position.

The induction process will include:

- Discussion about working arrangements and expectations, including professional code of conduct and duty of care
- Information about the review and appraisal system
- Opportunity to ask any questions regarding the Centre or expectations
- The new staff member will be provided with the following information:
 - Centre operation and hours
 - Policy & Procedures Information
 - Position Specification
 - Terms and conditions of employment
 - Taxation forms
 - Appropriate lines of communication with staff and Council
 - Code of Conduct
 - Code of Behaviour

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STAFF PROFESSIONALISM

(Refer to HR Policy 05 Code of Conduct July 2003)

POLICY STATEMENT

The professional attitude and behaviour of the staff is of utmost importance to the provision of a quality service with a positive reputation in the community and the standard of care provided for the children and families in the Centre. We aim to provide clear guidelines to the staff regarding the expectations for their professional behaviour in the centre.

CONSIDERATIONS

- City of Ryde Code of Conduct
- Duty of Care
- National Standards

PROCEDURE

- Staff professional code of conduct, duty of care and expectations will be discussed in the initial orientation process of all new staff.
- Staff will be made aware of their duty of care and their responsibility in relation to supervision, health and safety of the children.
- Professional behaviour in all areas will be reviewed as part of the ongoing employment of all staff.
- Staff will be made aware of the Centres philosophy and policies and will be expected to follow these. Should staff have any concerns with the policies they are to raise this with the Co-ordinator.
- Staff will be expected to know, understand and perform their duties as per their job description.
- Staff will be expected to start duties on time.
- Staff will be expected to dress appropriately for their duties.
- Staff must not attend work under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Staff should not attend work when they are unfit to do so due to injury or sickness and must inform the Centre as soon as possible.
- Staff will use only suitable language that is not offensive to other staff, parents or children.

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- The Centre is a smoke free zone. Staff may not smoke in or around the building, or in the sight of the children.
- Staff will be expected to know and follow the child protection policies.
- The quality of the Centre and positive working environment are dependent on good staff and parent relationships. Staff will follow proper communication procedures as outlined in the policy booklet.
- The maintenance of good teamwork is an expectation outlined in all job descriptions.

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STAFF REVIEW AND APPRAISAL

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide the best quality care for the children by ensuring that high standards of work performance and job satisfaction are maintained. An appraisal system will be conducted to provide avenues for discussion and improvement.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 3.4 (Fit and proper persons)

PROCEDURE

- The evaluation system can be used as a tool to identify future training needs of the staff.
- Head Supervisors will complete evaluations at the conclusion of each program.
- Where it is identified that the staff member is not meeting the required performance measures the following will be undertaken:
 - Support and guidance given to the staff to help them through the process and assist them in achieving the required standards.
 - The support can be given through the Co-ordinator or the Head Supervisor
 - A record made of the above, dated and signed by both parties.
 - Should no improvement be made by the next review then further action will be taken.
- If the staff member is dissatisfied then they should put their concern in writing asking for the decision to be reviewed or that they wish to pursue the issue further through other avenues.

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EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF POOR PERFORMANCE

POLICY STATEMENT

(Refer to HR Policy 6/1 Effective Management of Poor Performance)

We aim to provide a quality service through the professional behaviour and high standards of conduct of our staff. We will encourage staff to maintain good working relationships and have a commitment to maintaining a quality standard of work.

Should staff fall below clearly identified standards then we will address this in an appropriate and considerate manner.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 3.4 (Fit and proper persons)
- Relevant industrial agreements

PROCEDURE

- It is important that the staff are fully aware of their expectations as an employee in the centre and that clear guidelines are given regarding staff duties, code of conduct and professionalism.
- The Co-ordinator and Head Supervisor will ensure that all staff are given clear job descriptions and orientation into the position with opportunity to clarify any issues.
- Staff are encouraged to maintain good working relationships and have a commitment to maintaining a quality standard of work.
- Staff will be given clear notification should their standard of work or conduct fall below what is expected and outlined in their job description.
- Staff have the right to appeal against any allegation and the right to speak on their behalf or to have a union representative appear on their behalf.

The following steps will be followed to deal with poor work performance or conduct. There may not be the need to go through all the steps when the issue is resolved however staff should be aware of the whole process.

Should staff fall below clearly identified standards then the Co-ordinator will;

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STEP 1: VERBAL WARNING

- Give a verbal warning as soon as possible indicating the specific problem regarding the performance of their work or conduct. The issues must clearly relate to the job description.
- Indicate what should happen to improve the situation and how the staff member can improve their performance.
- Give an opportunity for the staff member to respond to the concerns. If this resolves the issue then there is no need to go any further.

STEP 2: TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

- If the problem still continues after warning has been provided a decision will be made as to the employment of the staff member.
- If the Co-ordinator believes that the staff member's performance is unlikely to improve then the staff member will be dismissed.
- A written notice may be given indicating that no further shifts will be offered.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH SERIOUS UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Where a staff member in the workplace:

- Intentionally endangers life
- Is found stealing
- Reports to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Inflicts or threatens physical or sexual abuse or harassment
- The employee is to be advised formally of investigation findings and the action being taken
- When immediate termination is required the staff member will have all shifts cancelled and employment terminated.
- All the relevant records will be recorded on the employee's file.

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RELIEF STAFF

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to continue the quality of care in the Centre by the employment of fit and proper persons for relief staff. A work agreement clearly outlining their duties and expectations will be given to all relief staff employed.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Local Government (State) Award

PROCEDURE

- If a staff member is unable to attend a designated shift due to illness or unavoidable circumstances they must initially contact relevant staff on the reserve list to find a replacement. If they are unable to find a replacement they must contact the Centre then Co-ordinator as soon as possible.
- The Co-ordinator will keep a register of relief staff, which will be maintained and updated regularly.
- A file recording experience, qualifications, Prohibited Employment Declaration and completed Working with Children Check, will be kept with the register.
- When no staff from the reserve list are available to fill a position, the Co-ordinator may contact an Employment Agency to employ someone they recommend from their relief list.
- Relief staff must adhere to all areas of confidentiality.
- Staff referred to Council by an employment agency will be paid in accordance with agency rates of pay.
- Payment of wages will be processed through Council and paid via cheque to the designated employment agency.

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VOLUNTEERS/STUDENTS/VISITATIONS

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to ensure the safe and proper care of the children in the Centre by having clear guidelines for any person who enters the centre or is involved with the children in any way. Specific guidelines will be developed for all volunteers, students and visitors in the Centre.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 3.4 (Fit and proper persons)
- Prohibited Employment Legislation

PROCEDURE

Volunteers

- All volunteers will be required to undertake appropriate employment screening including a Working with Children Check.
- A job description will be drawn up for volunteers, clearly outlining their duties and expectations of the Centre.
- The Team Leader will provide a modified induction to the centre, which will include a tour of the centre, introductions to staff, job description and information regarding the operations of the Centre.
- All volunteers will be required to sign on and off.
- Volunteers will be given a copy of relevant policies such as behaviour management.
- Volunteers are not to discuss children's development or other issues with parents.
- Volunteers must adhere to all areas of confidentiality.
- Volunteers should never be left alone with or in charge of any children.
- Volunteers will not be used to do tasks that the employed staff normally do.
- Volunteers will be not be included when calculating basic staff:child ratios.

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Students

Placements will be offered to:

- **High school students** who wish to gain work experience as part of a school program. The participating school must initiate the work experience, identify the students suitability and work with the Co-ordinator and Team Leader in relation to times and expectations. The school must provide written authorisation for the student and a copy of their insurance. This will be kept on file.
 - **Students attending other registered training organisations** and studying a relevant field, such as childcare, teaching, recreation or community services. The training organization must initiate the placement, identify the students suitability and work with the Co-ordinator in relation to times and expectations. The training organisation must provide written authorisation for the student and a copy of their insurance. This will be kept on file.
- All placements will be negotiated through the Co-ordinator and placement be only accepted on the discretion of the Co-ordinator based on issues such as staff ability to supervise and be available to help the students.
- Students will be provided with guidelines identifying their responsibilities, expectations and code of conduct while at the centre.
 - Students should be made aware of relevant policies such as behaviour management.
 - Students are not to discuss a child's development or other issues with the parents.
 - Students should adhere to all policies concerning confidentiality.
 - Students should never be left alone with or in charge of any children.
 - Students will not be used to do tasks that the employed staff normally do.

Visitors

- Visitors may be invited to the centre to stimulate the program.
- Visitors could include entertainers or community members or local organisations such as police, fire brigade etc.

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- Professional access to the Centre will be at the discretion of the Co-ordinator or when required by law to do so.
- Professionals include, union representatives, State and Federal Government Departmental Officers, Occupational Health and Safety inspectors, building inspectors and police officers.
- Any unwelcome visitor will be calmly asked to leave the Centre. If they refuse the Team Leader or staff member directed by the Co-ordinator will call the police for removal.
- No staff member is to try to physically remove the unwelcome person, but try to remain calm and keep the person calm as far as possible.

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STAFF : CHILD RATIOS

POLICY STATEMENT

We believe that the staff: child ratio is an important factor in determining the quality of care that we provide. We aim to maintain positive staff, child and parent interactions and quality and safe care through ensuring that we meet the minimum standards outlined in the National Standards.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards, Section 3.1 (Staff:child ratios)
- National Standards, Section 3.3 (Minimum staff numbers)
- Voluntary Code of Practice Section 3 Staff:child ratios

PROCEDURE

Staff : child ratios

The staff : child ratios as outlined in the Standards will be met at all times.

- There will be a maximum of 15 children to 1 staff member.
- There will be a maximum of 10 children to 1 staff member for excursions.
- There will be a maximum of 6 children to 1 staff member for swimming.
- The staff to child ratios as outlined in the Voluntary Code of Practice will be adhered to at all times.
- A child staff ratio of 1 to 6 for programs which integrate children with disabilities

Minimum staff numbers

- There will be a minimum of 2 staff members present at all times.
- When staff are sick or unable to attend work, appropriate relief staff will be employed to meet the standards.
- For an emergency or if a staff member becomes sick, a replacement should be obtained before the staff member leaves the centre.
- Students or volunteers will not be counted as part of the staff:child ratio at any time.
- Where possible extra carers will be encouraged to participate to assist in providing a higher standard of care.

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COMMUNICATION

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to maintain positive and open communication between all parties involved in the centre. Staff, parents and the relevant school will be made aware of appropriate communication avenues and procedures.

PROCEDURE

STAFF / MANAGEMENT

- Staff and members of Council are to treat each other with respect, courtesy and understanding.
- Appropriate language is to be maintained at all times.
- The Co-ordinator is the main line of communication between the staff and the Council.

STAFF/PARENT

- Staff will create a comfortable and supportive environment for parents and strive for open communication and good relations with parents.
- Staff and carers will treat each other with respect, courtesy and understanding.
- Appropriate language is to be maintained at all times.
- Staff will not be judgemental towards the parents and respect their need to use childcare.
- Staff will accept parent's individual differences in raising their children and in all cultural issues.
- Staff will attempt to ensure parents are greeted and farewelled
- Staff will maintain regular, open communication with parents. Staff should inform parents personally about anything relating to their children as an ongoing process. This could be praise about the child's day or activities, any problems the child might have had in the day, issues or behaviour that may have been a concern and so on.
- Staff will where necessary, talk to parents about the child's interests or activities and respond to suggestions from the parents.

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- Communication with parents will be maintained in a variety of ways such as:
 - Greeting and farewelling
 - Personal conversations
 - Notice boards
 - Brochures
 - Newsletters
- Staff will ensure that parents are fully aware of all lines of communication, and ensure these are followed.
- Staff will be aware of their limitations in relation to parent's problems and ensure they are referred to the appropriate people when required.
- Parents and staff are requested to maintain confidentiality at all times.

STAFF / CHILD

- Staff and children are to treat each other with respect, courtesy and understanding.
- Staff will respect children's opinions and encourage their participation in the planning of the program and in establishing a code of behaviour for the Centre.
- Appropriate language is to be maintained at all times.
- Staff will use appropriate voice tone and level when talking to children. Shouting should be avoided.
- Staff will be supportive and encouraging and communicate to children in a friendly positive and courteous manner.
- Staff will initiate conversations with all children, and develop an understanding of the child and their interests.
- Staff will give praise and positive feedback to the children as often as possible.
- Staff will form friendly and warm relationships with the children in their care.
- When communicating with children staff will ensure that they are understood and communicate at the child's level.
- Staff are to enforce appropriate methods of behaviour management as a result of breaches of centre rules. Centre rules will be devised and revised during morning sessions.

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- Children will never be singled out or made to feel inadequate at any time.
- Staff will not threaten or verbally abuse the children in any way.

STAFF / STAFF

- Staff members are to treat each other with respect, courtesy and empathy.
- Appropriate language is to be used between staff at all times.
- Staff are expected to work together as a team and be supportive of each other in the workplace.
- Staff are to read the daily communication book prior to the commencement of each roster.
- Staff will familiarise themselves with the content of all notices displayed around the centre.
- A staff member with concerns about the work practices or standards of another staff member will firstly approach that staff member to discuss the matter. If the matter remains unresolved, then the grievance procedures will be followed.
- Staff should not unnecessarily involve parents or other staff members in their matters of grievance or complaint.

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SECTION D: OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

POLICY STATEMENT

City of Ryde is committed to providing a workplace that is safe and without risk to health or the welfare of all employees, contractors and members of the public in our workplaces, and the effective rehabilitation of injured employees.

POLICY PRACTICES OR PROCEDURES:

To achieve this objective City of Ryde undertakes to comply with all relevant OHS legislation and regulations. Where it is identified that these do not adequately cover a health and safety risk to the Council, its employees, contractors, visitors or members of the public a standard will be determined quickly and adopted.

City of Ryde is also committed to the implementation and continuous improvement of OHS policies and procedures, maintained and set out in Council's Intranet under Policies and Information in Lotus Notes, which form part of Council's OHS Management System.

In implementing this policy and the OHS Management System, the General manager, Group managers, Service Unit Managers, Work Group Leaders, Team Leaders and employees will:

- adopt a consultative approach with employees, contractors or other affected groups, and encourage the dissemination of OHS information;
- comply with OHS legislation and standards and WorkCover Authority's Compensation and Injury Management requirements;
- facilitate ongoing management and improvement of the OHS Management System throughout Council based on a 'best practice' approach;
- facilitate the integration of OHS into all of the Council's planning and operations;
- support the establishment and operation of an effective workplace OHS committee to foster ongoing employee involvement in OHS issues;

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- ensure employees, contractors or other affected groups are appropriately researched and trained in relation to OHS processes/issues;
- treat OHS as a core management responsibility to improve understanding of responsibilities at all levels in the organisation;
- minimise Council's exposure to human and financial loss and respond quickly to assess the impact of any potential problem.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001
- Local Government (State) Award 2001
- Workplace Injury Management & Workers Compensation Act 1998
- Ryde City Council – OHS Committee Constitution
- Ryde City Council – OHS Policies and Procedures – see Appendix 3

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HYGIENE

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide a healthy and hygienic environment that will promote the health of the children, staff and parents. All people in the centre will follow preventative measures in infection control. Staff will ensure that they maintain and model appropriate hygiene practices.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 1.3 (Toilets and hand basins)
- National Standards Section 2.3 (Infectious diseases)
- National Standards Section 2.10 (Health of staff and children)

PROCEDURE

- All toilet facilities will have access to a basin or sink with running cold water.
- All toilet facilities will have soap for washing hands.
- Women and girls will have access to proper feminine hygiene disposal.
- Toilets, hand basins and kitchen facilities will be cleaned regularly
- Hand washing will be practised by staff and children before preparing or eating food and after all dirty tasks such as toileting, cleaning up any items, wiping a nose, before and after administering first aid, playing outside or handling an animal. The cleaning up and clearing of general rubbish materials requires the utilisation of disposable rubber gloves. General clean up at the centre will only be undertaken if the area is free from hazardous materials, substances and if no risk is evident.
- Staff will maintain and model appropriate behaviour and encourage the children to adopt hygiene practices.
- All staff must wear disposable gloves when in contact with blood, open sores or other bodily substance, clothes contaminated with bodily fluids or cleaning up a contaminated area. Staff will wash hands with soap and water after removing the gloves.
- Staff with cuts, open wounds or skin disease such as dermatitis should cover their wounds and wear disposable gloves. Used gloves should be disposed of safely.
- All surfaces will be cleaned with detergent after each activity and at the end of the day.

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- All contaminated surfaces will be disinfected.
- Children should not share hats.
- Children will be reminded not to share drinks, utensils or use items that have been dropped on the floor.
- All cups, plates and utensils will be washed in hot, soapy water.
- All rubbish or left over food will be disposed of immediately.

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FOOD AND NUTRITION

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to encourage the consumption of nutritious and varied food of good quality in the Centre. Children will be encouraged to develop good eating habits through good examples and education. Parents will be encouraged to share family and multicultural values and ideas to enrich the variety and enjoyment of food by the children. High standards of hygiene will be maintained throughout any food preparation. Staff will ensure that rubber gloves are worn during food preparation, that food has been stored properly and purchased from reputable outlets and that all food handling utensils are clean and sterile.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 2.7 (Food)
- National Standards Section 2.8 (Drinking water)
- National Standards Section 2.9.3 (Building cleanliness, maintenance and repair)
- Public Health Act

PROCEDURE

- During vacation care, parents will be asked to provide their children with a healthy morning and afternoon tea, lunch and drinks, unless otherwise stated on the program.
- Any food provided by the Centre will be prepared in a hygienic manner.
- Where children are involved in food preparation, this should always be supervised and hygienic conditions maintained.
- Food requiring refrigeration will be stored in the refrigerator.
- Children should be seated while eating or drinking.

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HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy recognises all employees and third parties who use or have been, are or may be exposed to hazardous substances in our workplaces are owed a duty of care, so far as practicable, to be provided with a working environment that is safe and without risk to health.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001
- The Dangerous Goods Act 1975
- Pesticides Act 1978
- Pesticides Amendment (Records) Regulation 2001
- Guidance Note for the Assessment of Health Risks Arising from Hazardous Substances in the Workplace [NOHSC:3017(1994)]
- List of Designated Hazardous Substances [NOHSC:10005 (1999)]
- Approved Criteria for Classifying Hazardous Substances [NOHSC: 1008 (1999)]
- City of Ryde OHS Policies and Procedures

PROCEDURE

- Hazardous machinery, chemicals and activities which are likely to cause potential danger to children, staff or others in the Centre will not be used or undertaken while the service is in operation.
- Should any pests or vermin be identified then action will be taken to rid the Centre of the problem by initially using non-chemical methods such as physical removal, maintaining a clean environment, and use of any non-chemical products.
- Low irritant, environmentally friendly sprays will be used minimally and only with adequate ventilation, and preferably not in the presence of the children.

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- All staff will be made aware on initial orientation in the centre, of any potentially dangerous products, which may pose a danger to the children and where these are stored.
- All potentially dangerous products such as cleaning materials, disinfectants, flammable, poisonous and other dangerous substances, tools, toiletries, first aid equipment, and medications will be stored in the appropriate containers, clearly labelled and stored in the designated secured area which is inaccessible to the children.
- Staff are responsible to ensure that these areas remain secure and do not inadvertently provide access to these items by the children.
- Cleaning and hazardous products should not be stored close to foodstuffs or where storage of these products might contaminate foodstuffs.

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TRANSPORTATION

POLICY STATEMENT

We believe that children travelling to and from the Centre and on excursions have the right to be safe. We will ensure that all modes of transportation undertaken will be safe and comply with all the required regulations.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 2.13 (Transport)
- Road and Transport Regulations

PROCEDURE

- All vehicles used by the Centre will comply with the appropriate road and transport regulations, will be mechanically sound, have regular maintenance and have third party and comprehensive insurance.
- Children will be required to remain seated and not behave in a dangerous or distracting manner. The driver will stop the vehicle if necessary, in a safe place until the children comply with instructions.
- When picking up children, the bus should be parked in a location which does not require children to cross roads.
- The driver will ensure that the vehicle has the appropriate number of passengers for the vehicle and that it is not overloaded.
- All drivers will carry the Centre's name, address and contact number at all times. An emergency contact number should also be provided.

In the case of a vehicle breakdown the staff person in charge or the driver will:

- phone the centre to inform the Co-ordinator
- the Co-ordinator and the staff member will discuss suitable alternative transport and organise for this to be undertaken
- ensure that the children are kept safe at all times
- The Co-ordinator will inform the parents of the breakdown if necessary.

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In the case of a vehicle accident the staff person in charge or the driver will:

- check to see if any children or staff are hurt, conduct first aid and phone for an ambulance if necessary
- comfort and calm the children
- ensure that the children are safe at all times
- take the required details of the other driver involved: name, contact, registration number, driver's licence, insurer and any damage made to either vehicle
- phone the centre to inform the Co-ordinator, and organise alternative transport.
- phone the police if necessary
- complete an accident report on return to the centre
- Where possible a mobile phone should be carried in case of accident or emergency and children should be instructed to stay with the vehicle until assistance arrives. The Centre's details should always be carried on the vehicle.
- The Co-ordinator will inform the parents of the incident, and ensure that all the appropriate accident procedures are undertaken.

When transporting children by foot staff will:

- ensure that the safest route is taken
- ensure children cross the road at the crossing or lights where available, and obey the road rules
- undertake extreme care crossing all roads
- keep children together as a group and walk in line on pavements.
- take appropriate wet weather gear, jackets or sun hats to use as required
- Children should be made aware of all the rules associated with all the modes of transport. Staff will ensure that these rules are enforced

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ANIMALS

POLICY STATEMENT

Although animals are not a necessary part of the program, we believe that animals can be a valuable source of learning and enjoyment for the children. Any animals that enter the Centre must be safe and present no danger to the children in any way. Staff will ensure that everyone in the centre will treat with respect and in a humane way all animals, at all times. Strict supervision will be maintained.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 2.11 (Animals)
- Animal Rights

PROCEDURE

- The decision to have an animal visit the Centre will be made by the Co-ordinator, based on an observed need or value to the children.
- Any animal or bird will only be considered with the clear understanding of their being safe and suitable with children, and an assurance that the animal will be properly cared for.
- No animal, bird or livestock will be allowed in the program area which is likely to be a source of infection or which in any way may be detrimental to the wellbeing of the children.
- Checks need to be made regarding individual children's allergies before considering an animal in the Centre.
- Children will be encouraged to wash hands after handling animals of any kind.

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SUN PROTECTION

POLICY STATEMENT

(Refer to HR Policy 7/19 Sun Protection for Operational Purposes)

All staff required to work outside an office, building or workshop for any period greater than 30 minutes between the hours of 10.00 am and 4.00 pm of their working day, are required to wear, for the whole working day, protective clothing, including wide brimmed hat and sunscreen cream on all exposed skin surfaces to reduce the harmful effects of ultra violet radiation from the sun.

This group would include, but is not limited to, all operations staff in Engineering Services, Environmental Health and Property Services and Parks and Community Services. *(This will include those employees in Categories 2 or 3 who work outside for any period in aggregate greater than 30 minutes).*

PROCEDURE

- Children and staff will wear protective clothing when outside such as hats that protect their face, ears and neck, and shirts that cover their shoulders and necks.
- Staff will direct children to wear hats for outdoor play.
- Children who do not have a hat must play in a sheltered area. Staff are to enforce the 'no hat no outside play' rule.
- Children will not share hats. Children's hats will not be stored in the same container. Where the Centre's spare hats are used they are to be used only by one child. All spare hats will be washed before use by anyone else.
- An SPF 15+, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen will be made available in the centre and applied to staff and children when exposed to the sun.
- Parents will be informed of the sun protection policy on enrolling their child in the Centre.
- Parents are encouraged to apply a sunscreen to their child prior to attending the Centre, and reminded to supply a suitable hat.
- Where children have allergies or sensitivity to the sunscreen, parents will be asked to provide an alternative sunscreen, and the child encouraged to play in the sheltered areas.
- The sun protection message should be reinforced throughout the program.

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- Activities are to be planned to avoid exposure to the sun between the hours of 11am and 2pm.
- Outdoor activities will be held in shaded areas whenever possible.
- The centre will incorporate sun and skin protection awareness activities in the program and provide notices and posters about the topic.
- All sun protection practices will be maintained while on all excursions.

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EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide an environment that provides for the safety and wellbeing of the children at all times. All children and staff will be aware of, and practised in, emergency and evacuation procedures. In the event of an emergency, natural disaster or threats of violence these procedures will be immediately undertaken.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 2.12 (Emergency procedures/fire drills)
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Australian Standards
- Network's 'Fire Safety Guidelines'

PROCEDURE

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

- All staff, including relief staff, will be informed of the procedure and their specific duties identified in their orientation to the centre. Staff will make arrangements as to duties undertaken in the absence of other staff.
- Staff will only attempt to extinguish fires if the fire is small, there is no threat to their personal safety and they feel confident to operate the extinguisher and all the children have been evacuated from the room.
- Staff should be aware of bush fire danger and have appropriate training on the necessary procedures.
- In the event of any emergency staff members will be nominated to:
 - make the announcement to evacuate, identifying where and how
 - collect children's attendance records and parents' contact numbers
 - collect emergency services numbers
 - make the phone call to 000 or other appropriate service, Council and parents as required
 - collect the first aid kit
 - check that the building and playground is empty and that all doors and windows are closed as far as possible, to reduce the spread of a fire
 - supervise the children at the assembly area, and take a roll call of children

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- When the emergency service arrives the Co-ordinator will inform the officer in charge of the nature and location of the emergency and if there is anyone missing
- No one should re-enter the building until the officer in charge has said it is safe to do so
- Children will be provided with general fire drill procedures on a regular basis

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HARASSMENT AND THREATS OF VIOLENCE

CONSIDERATIONS

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001
- WorkCover NSW Health and Safety Guide 2001: Violence in the Workplace No. 70
- WorkCover NSW Health and Safety Fact Sheet 2001: Violence in the Workplace No. 68
- City of Ryde - Charter
- City of Ryde - Prevention of Harassment Policy
- City of Ryde - Prevention of Discrimination
- City of Ryde - Employee Assistance Program
- City of Ryde - Risk Management Policy
- City of Ryde - Incident/Hazard Reporting and Investigation Policy
- City of Ryde - Workplace Injury Management and Workers' Compensation Policy
- City of Ryde - EEO Management Plan
- City of Ryde - Policies and Procedures

- If a person/s known or unknown to the service harasses or makes threats to children or staff at the Centre, or on an excursion, staff will:
 - calmly and politely ask them to leave the centre or the vicinity of the children
 - be firm and clear and remember their primary duty is to the children in your care
 - if they refuse to leave, explain that it may be necessary to call the police to remove them
 - if they still do not leave, call the police
 - if the Co-ordinator is unable to make the call another staff member should be directed to do so
 - where possible staff will calmly move the children away from the person

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FIRST AID

POLICY STATEMENT

(Refer to HR Policy 7/8 First Aid)

City of Ryde recognises that in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2001 it has a responsibility to provide first aid assistance to persons sustaining an injury or illness in the workplace. To achieve these responsibilities, Council shall as far as is reasonably practicable provide first aid services by:

- appointing and training First Aid Officers to undertake duties to assist in the prompt delivery of treatment for injuries;
- providing First Aid Kits and supplies;
- accommodating all staff who wish to be trained in First Aid.

In promoting Occupational Health and Safety awareness in Council and the community, Council encourages staff to undertake Senior First Aid training in consultation with their Manager.

This policy and procedure has been developed to ensure that First Aid Kits and / or suitably trained employees are available if treatment is required. This policy and procedure applies to all Ryde City Council operations.

We believe that first aid equipment and facilities should be available to all staff, children and visitors in the centre and while on excursions. All staff will be encouraged to undertake first aid training as part of their conditions of employment to ensure full and proper care of all is maintained.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 2.5 (First aid facilities and qualifications)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001
- Occupational Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulation 1989
- Local Government (State) Award 2001
- Needle Stick Injury Policy HR 7/17
- Workplace Inspection Policy HR7/4
- Occupational Health and Safety Committee Constitution

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PROCEDURE

- A minimum of one staff member present at all times will be currently qualified in first aid.
- A fully stocked and updated first aid kit will be kept in the designated locked and secured place in the Centre. Staff are to ensure that this is easily accessible to all staff and kept inaccessible to the children.
- A separate travelling first aid kit will be also maintained and taken on all excursions and whilst outdoors.
- The first aid kit will contain the minimum equipment suggested by the Red Cross or St Johns Ambulance.
- A first aid manual will also be kept at the Centre.
- A cold pack will be kept in the freezer for treatment of bruises and strains.
- An inventory of the kits will be maintained by the centre Head Supervisor.
- Staff and relief workers will be made aware of the first aid kit, where it is kept and their responsibilities in relation to it in the orientation process.
- Qualified first aides will only administer first aid in minor accidents or to stabilise the victim until expert assistance arrives in more serious accidents.

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INCIDENTS

POLICY STATEMENT

We will ensure the safety and well being of staff, children and visitors, within the centre and on excursions, through proper care and attention in the event of an accident. The centre will make every attempt to ensure sound management of the injury to prevent any worsening of the situation. Parents or emergency contacts will be informed immediately where the accident is serious.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 2.4 (Illness and accidents)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Duty of Care

PROCEDURE

- “The person caring for the child assumes responsibility for acting in the best interests of the child in the event of an injury. The careful exercise of this discretion is considered part of the staff’s duty of care.”
(*Guide to the Law for Children’s Services, NSW Community Child Care Co-op*)
- Parents are required to provide written consent for staff to seek medical attention for their child if required before they start in the centre. This will be recorded on the parent’s enrolment form.
- Parents will be required to supply the contact number of their preferred doctor.
- Staff will also be required to supply two contact numbers in case of an emergency or accident.
- If a child, staff member or visitor has an accident while at the centre they will be attended to immediately by a staff member who holds a first aid certificate.
- In the case of medication being required in an emergency without prior consent of the parents/guardians, staff are to secure that consent from a registered medical practitioner.
- Anyone injured will be kept under adult supervision until they recover or an authorised person takes charge of them.

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In the case of a minor incident the first aid attendant will:

- assess the injury
- attend to the injured person and apply first aid as required
- ensure that disposable gloves are used with any contact with blood or bodily fluids
- ensure that all blood or bodily fluids are cleaned up and disposed of in a safe manner
- ensure that anyone who has come in contact with any blood or bodily fluids wash in warm soapy water
- record the incident and treatment given in the accident book, indicating name, date, time, nature of injury, how occurred, treatment given and by whom, to be signed by staff and witnessed if possible
- obtain parent signature confirming knowledge of the accident
- notify the parents either by phone after the incident if seen fit or on their arrival to collect the child
- parents should sign on a separate form that they have been informed of the accident

In the case of a major incident requiring more than first aid, the first aid attendant will:

- assess the injury, and decide whether the child needs to be attended to by local doctor or whether an ambulance should be called and tell the Co-ordinator of their decision
- if the child's injury is serious the first priority is to get immediate medical attention. attend to the injured person and apply first aid required
- ensure that disposable gloves are used with any contact with blood or bodily fluids
- stay with the child until suitable help arrives, or further treatment taken
- try to make the child comfortable and reassure them
- if an ambulance is called and the child is taken to hospital a staff member will accompany the child and take the child's medical records

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record the incident and treatment given in the accident book, indicating name, date, time, nature of injury, how occurred, treatment given and by whom, to be signed by staff and witnessed if possible

obtain parent signature confirming knowledge of the accident

- The Co-ordinator or other responsible staff member will:
 - notify the parents or emergency contact person immediately regarding what happened and action is being taken
 - ensure that all blood or bodily fluids are cleaned up in a safe manner
 - ensure that anyone who has come in contact with any blood or fluids washes in warm soapy water
 - try to reassure the other children and keep them calm, keeping them informed about what is happening, and away from the injured child
 - Staff will adhere to the Hygiene policy in all accident situations.

Incidents which result in serious injury to a child, must be reported to:

- Parents/Guardian
- An ambulance service
- The police
- The Department of Community Services
- Clear emergency procedure should be maintained for the other children at the Centre.
- The Centre will notify the parent/guardian that a serious incident has happened and advise them to contact the relevant medical agency.

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DEATH OF A CHILD

POLICY STATEMENT

Staff in the centre must be prepared to handle all incidents in a professional and sensitive manner. In the event of such tragic circumstance as the death of a child, the staff will follow guidelines as set out below.

CONSIDERATIONS

NSW Department of Community Services Guidelines

PROCEDURE

- The death of a child must be reported to:
 - an ambulance service
 - the police
 - the Co-ordinator
 - WorkCover
 - the Department of Community Services
- Clear emergency procedure should be maintained for the other children at the centre.
- The Centre will notify the parent/guardian that a serious incident has happened and advise them to contact the relevant medical agency.
- This information should be provided in an extremely sensitive manner.
- It is not the role of the Centre to inform the parent/guardian that their child has died.
- Counselling will be made available for all children and staff.

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ILLNESS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide a safe and hygienic environment that will promote the health of the children. As the care needs of a sick child cannot be met without dramatically reducing the general level of supervision of the other children, or risking other children's health, parents will be asked not to bring sick children to the centre and to collect children who are unwell. All care and consideration will be given to the child who becomes ill while at the centre. Children with infectious diseases will be excluded from the Centre for the period recommended by the Department of Health.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 2.3 (Infectious diseases)
- National Standards Section 2.4 (Illness and accidents)
- Department of Health guidelines
- Department of Education guidelines

PROCEDURE

- A child or adult will be considered sick and unfit to attend the centre if he/she:
 - has a fever over 38 degrees
 - is crying constantly from discomfort
 - vomits or has diarrhoea
 - is in need of one to one care
 - has an infectious disease
- If a child is unwell at home parents will be asked not to bring the child to the Centre.
- If a staff member is unwell they should not report for work. Staff should contact the Centre as soon as possible to inform them that they are unable to attend work.
- If a child becomes ill or develops symptoms at the centre the parents will be contacted to take the child home.
- If a staff member becomes ill or develops symptoms at the Centre they can return home if able or organise for someone to take them home.
- The Co-ordinator will organise a suitable replacement as soon as possible.

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- The child who is ill will be comforted, cared for and placed in a quiet isolated area with adult supervision until the child's parent or other authorised adult takes them home.
- During a fever other methods will be employed to bring the child's temperature down until the parents arrive or help is sought. Such methods include: provision of fluids, tepid sponges administered.
- If a child's temperature is very high, cannot be brought down and parents cannot be contacted, the child's doctor will be contacted and permission sought to give paracetamol. If the situation becomes serious the child will be taken to the doctor or an ambulance called.

Infectious Diseases

- Children and staff will be excluded from the centre if they are ill with any contagious illness. This includes diarrhoea and conjunctivitis.
- The Co-ordinator or staff members have the right to refuse access if concerned about the child's health.
- A doctor's clearance certificate will be required for all infectious diseases such as measles, mumps diphtheria, hepatitis A, polio, tuberculosis, typhoid and paratyphoid before returning to the Centre.
- The Co-ordinator will follow the recommendations as outlined in the Health Department document.
- Parents will be informed about the occurrence of an infectious disease in the centre ensuring that the individual rights of staff or children are not infringed upon.
- All staff will ensure proper hygiene practices are carried out as outlined in the Hygiene policy.
- Under the provisions of the Public Health Act 1991 and Regulation, doctors, hospital chief executives (or general managers), pathology laboratories, directors of childcare centres and school principals are required to notify the following diseases:

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- Diphtheria
- Mumps
- Poliomyelitis
- Tetanus
- Measles
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Rubella (german measles)

- Notification requested by phone, if possible.

Notification Mechanisms

Infectious diseases:

- Infectious diseases should be directed to the local Public Health Unit, and should be notified within 24 hours of diagnosis.
- All infectious diseases notification forms are available from Public Health Units.

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IMMUNISATION

POLICY STATEMENT

(Refer to HR Policy 7 / 9 Immunisation)

"New staff members may receive a course of Hepatitis A, B and Tetanus immunisation free of charge provided a recommendation is made by the Manager/Work Group Leader based on risk assessment. At present the immunisation course consists of three injections.

We respect the right of individual parents to choose whether to immunise or not to immunise their children. However children who are not immunised will be excluded for the period of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Department of Health Recommendations
- DFACS Policy as outlined in OSHC Handbook

PROCEDURE

- In the event of an outbreak of vaccine-preventable disease at the centre or school attended by children at the Centre, children not immunised will be required to stay at home for the duration of the outbreak, for their own protection.
- The Public Health Unit will be notified if any child contracts a vaccine-preventable disease.
- Payment of fees will be required for children excluded during an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, unless other arrangements, discussed and agreed to by Council have been made.
- All staff should also maintain through immunisation, their immunity to common childhood diseases.

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ALLERGIES

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide safe and effective care of children by ensuring that staff are fully aware of reactions to, and management of, any child's allergies.

PROCEDURE

- Parents will be asked to inform the Centre of any allergies the child may have at the time of enrolment.
- This information will be recorded on the child's enrolment form.
- If a food allergy exists, parents will be asked to supply any particular diet if required.
- All staff are to make themselves aware of children's allergies listed on the Centre session roll.

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MEDICATION

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to ensure the proper care and attention to all children through following specific guidelines regarding all medications given to the children.

To ensure the interests of staff, children and parents are not compromised medication will only be administered with the explicit permission of the parents or in the case of an emergency with the permission of a medical practitioner. Specific consideration will also be given to children who are carrying medication in their school bags.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 2.6 (Medication)
- 'Guidelines for Administering Medication' Network of Community Activities.

PROCEDURE

- Parents who wish medication to be administered to their child at the centre must complete the medication form providing the following information.
 - name of medication
 - date, exact time and dosage to be administered. (General time, eg lunchtime will not be accepted.)
 - signature
- If a child is taking long term medication on a daily basis (such as ritalin), there is a specific "long term medication record" must be completed. The staff will countersign each time medication is administered.
- Medication must be given directly to an authorised staff member 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 the medication in the designated secure place, clearly labelled.
- Staff will ensure that medication is kept out of reach of the children at all times.
- Medication will only be administered from its original packaging and by authorised staff member.

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- Prescription medication will be administered only to the child for whom it is prescribed, from the original container bearing the child's name and with a current use by date.
- Non-prescription medication will not be administered at the Centre unless authorised by a doctor.
- Medication will be administered with the parent's written permission only, or with the approval of a medical practitioner in the case of an emergency.
- Authorisation from anyone other than the parents cannot be accepted.
- If anyone other than the parent is bringing the child to the Centre, a written permission note from the parent, including the above information, must accompany the medication.
- Before medication is given to a child the authorised staff member (usually the staff member with First Aid Certificate) who is administering the medication will verify the correct dosage with another staff member.
- A second staff member is to witness the administration of the medication.
- After the medication is given the authorised staff member will record the details on the medication form. Name of medication, date, time, dosage, name of person who administered and name of person who verified and witnessed.
- Where a medical practitioner's approval is given staff will complete the medication form and write the name of the medical practitioner for the authorisation.
- If children are receiving medication at home or school but not at the Centre parents should inform the Centre of the nature of the medication and its purpose and of any side effects it may have for the child so that staff can properly care for the child.

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HIV/AIDS/HEP B AND C

POLICY STATEMENT

We respect the right for all children to be cared for and aim to provide a safe and secure environment for all children in the Centre. We will not discriminate against any child or family's right to achieve that care as outlined in the law. We believe that HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B and C are best dealt with by preventative measures and will ensure that clear guidelines are given to eliminate the risk of spreading the diseases and ensure the safety of all staff and children. Proper confidentiality will also apply.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 5.3 (Maintenance of records)
- Federal Disability Discrimination Act
- Equal Opportunity Act
- Occupational Health and Safety Act

PROCEDURE

- Under the Federal Disability Act and the Equal Opportunity Act, no discrimination will take place based on a child's/parent's/staff member's HIV status.
- Discrimination in regard to access to the centre is unlawful. A child with HIV or Hepatitis B or C has the right to obtain a position in the centre should a position become available and a staff member the right to equal opportunity of employment.
- A child with AIDS shall be treated as any other child, as HIV is not transmitted through casual contact.
- Where staff are informed of a child, parent or other staff member who has HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis B or C, this information will remain confidential at all times. A breach of this confidentiality will be considered a breach of the relevant legislation.
- Staff will ensure that no discussion is made other than insuring proper care of all children is maintained.
- Proper safe and hygienic practices will be followed at all times.
- No one will ever be denied the right to first aid.

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- All staff dealing with open sores, cuts and bodily fluids with any child or adult will wear disposable gloves.
- Staff with cuts, open wounds or skin disease such as dermatitis will cover their wounds and wear disposable gloves.
- Disposable gloves will be properly and safely discarded and staff are to wash their hands after doing so.
- If a child has an open wound it will be covered with a waterproof dressing and securely attached.
- If bodily fluids or blood gets on the skin but there is no cut or puncture, wash away with hot soapy water.
- In the event of exposure through cuts or chapped skin, promptly wash away the fluid, encourage bleeding and wash in cold or tepid soapy water.
- In the event of exposure to the mouth, promptly spit it out and rinse mouth with water several times.
- In the event of exposure to the eyes, promptly rinse gently with cold or tepid tap water or saline solution.
- In the event of having to perform CPR, disposable sterile mouth masks will be used, or if unavailable a piece of cloth.
- Any exposure will be reported to the Co-ordinator and Council to ensure proper follow up procedures occur.

Note: Hot water may coagulate the blood and protect the virus from the soap or disinfectant. It is best to use cold or tepid water temperatures in all cleaning processes.

- Any soiled clothing will be handled using disposable gloves, soaked in disinfectant or hot soapy water. Clothing will be placed and sealed in a plastic bag for the parents to take home.
- Any blood or bodily fluid spills will be cleaned up immediately, using gloves and the area fully disinfected.
- Cloths used in cleaning will be wrapped in plastic bags and properly disposed of.

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- Staff and parents will be encouraged to participate in AIDS and Hepatitis education. Education can take the form of staff training, educational seminars, brochures, etc.

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CHILD PROTECTION

POLICY STATEMENT

(Refer to HR Policy 05 Conditions of Employment: Child Protection Policy)

City of Ryde is committed to providing high quality services to all members of the Ryde community, including children. Safe access to such services is the right of all children and Council expects all employees to respect this right.

Procedures are in place to ensure that:

- child-related employment in City of Ryde is identified and positions are designated and managed in accordance with child protection legislation;
- mandatory reporting requirements are met;
- employment screening is undertaken for prospective appointments to all positions designated as child-related employment;
- disclosures are sought from existing and prospective employees in designated positions;
- reportable allegations are handled professionally and sensitively so as to meet legislative requirements and guarantee the safety and privacy of individuals.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- Department of Community Services Mandatory Reporting Guidelines
- Working With Children Check
- Ombudsman Amendment (Child Protection & Community Services) Act 1998
- Commission for Children & Young People Act 1998
- Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998
- Children & Young Persons (Care & Protection) Act 1998
- Crimes Act 1900
- 'Child Protection: Your New Responsibilities', NSW Ombudsman, May 1999

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- 'Protecting Our Children – The New Legal Framework' Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW, 1999
- Local Government Act 1993
- City of Ryde 'Equity & Diversity – Equal Employment Opportunity' Policy Number HR 8/1

PROCEDURE

- All staff applying for casual positions in the vacation care program must complete the Working with Children Check Attachment 3 and 4 to declare that they are not prohibited from seeking, undertaking or remaining in child related employment and to be eligible for any employment.
- A mandatory reporter is someone who is required by law to make a report to DoCS if they have current concerns about the safety, welfare or well being of a child. A child is a person under 16 years. There are penalties for failing to make a report
- In vacation care services mandatory reporters are:
 - Staff who deliver services to children
 - Management, either paid or voluntary, whose duties include direct responsibility or direct supervision for the provision of these services. *(from Information supplied by Department of Community Services Helpline Information Kit 2001)*
- Staff will undergo training in relation to child protection and notification as part of the training budget.
- Two staff members will be rostered at the Centre at all times.

Any staff member who forms a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is being abused or neglected should notify:

The DoCS Helpline

- 13 DOCS (13 3627) Mandatory reporters only
- 132 111 for members of the general public to report child abuse and neglect.

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Staff should phone the DoCS Helpline if they suspect:

- child abuse or neglect
 - concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child.
- DoCS Helpline will take requests from across NSW 24 hours a day, for the cost of a local call. All calls will be answered by specialised child protection staff.
 - Staff should remember that it is not their responsibility to prove the reportable conduct, just to have reasonable suspicion that abuse or neglect has occurred.
 - Staff may wish to discuss correct procedures to be followed with the Co-ordinator.
 - Reports should be treated with strict confidentiality.
 - Staff will leave the situation in the hands of the designated Departmental officers once a report has been made. They should not discuss the issue with the parents, or try to undertake any investigation into the situation.
 - The staff will not question the child or parents prior to any discussions with the Departmental Helpline Officers.
 - Should the situation arise where the child is considered in immediate danger and the child is taken into Departmental care, staff are to follow the advice of the Departmental Officers.
 - In all situations staff will follow the advice of the Departmental Officers and ensure that confidentiality is observed at all times.
 - Staff should be aware that they are protected as a reporter under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998.
 - DoCS has published information on mandatory reporting. The following resources for staff and mandatory reporters should be available at the centre for referral at all times:
 - Mandatory Reporters Booklet
 - Reporting Checklist
 - DoCS Helpline fact sheet - mandatory reporters

For copies contact: DoCS Media and Publications Unit: fax: 02 9716 2677

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WHERE A COMPLAINT IS MADE ABOUT A STAFF MEMBER, OR SOMEONE IN THE CENTRE

- The person making the report should follow the advice of Council Officers. All complaints will be handled by the Council's Child Protection Co-ordinator.
- The matter will be treated with strict confidentiality and dealt with in accordance with Council's Child Protection Policy.
- For the protection of both the children and the staff member involved, the staff member may be required to take special leave or be removed from duties involving direct care and contact with children, until the situation is followed up or resolved.

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CHILD BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide an environment where all parents, staff and children feel safe, cared for and relaxed and which encourages co-operation and positive interactions between all persons. Rules will be clearly established based on safety, respect for others, order, cleanliness and which help create a caring environment. Positive behaviour will be encouraged and self-discipline skills developed through positive example and direction.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Children's and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- Voluntary Code of Practice, Section 12 (Exclusion for unacceptable behaviour)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Play - Rights and Responsibilities of children, staff and parents for a co-operative OOSH environment (Network)

PROCEDURE

- Basic rules and clear guidelines of acceptable behaviour will be established through consultation with staff and children.
- Rules will encourage respect for the rights of others and help create a caring environment and be based on safety, order and cleanliness.
- All rules will be clearly expressed in a positive way and reinforced consistently.
- Rules will be displayed at the centre at all times.
- All consequences to breaking centre rules will be relevant to the individual situation determined by the Team Leader / Supervisor
- No child is to be subjected to, or threatened with, corporal punishment.
- No child is to have food or other basic needs withdrawn as part of punishment.
- Staff will only use time-out for short periods, where children are encouraged to sit and think. Staff will follow up all time-out situations by discussing the situation with the child and working together on better solutions for future

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behaviour. All episodes of time-out will be recorded and signed by the parent.

- Positive behaviour will be encouraged by role modelling, diverting children to more appropriate activities, showing appreciation for appropriate behaviour and building on each child's strengths and achievements.
- Children are to be given opportunities that enable them to be responsible for their own behaviour through the development of problem solving skills.
- Children will be encouraged to seek support when necessary.
- Staff will have access to training and support in positive approaches to behaviour management. This will be made available as part of the training budget.
- To assist in maintaining a positive, safe and caring environment the staff and children will have the following responsibilities:

THE CHILDREN WILL:

- Accept and value every child and adult regardless of race, cultural background religion, sex or ability
- Treat each other with respect, courtesy and understanding
- Be encouraged to maintain positive communication and relationships between staff, children and other adults
- Ensure that appropriate language is used at all times
- Know and fulfil their responsibilities
- Settle their differences in a peaceful manner, try to use communication to resolve difficulties rather than resort to violence
- Develop self -discipline skills through positive example and direction
- Develop an understanding that behaviour results from choice made by the individual and that all behaviour has consequences

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THE STAFF WILL:

- Accept and value every child and adult regardless of race, cultural background religion, sex or ability
- Treat children with respect, courtesy and understanding
- Maintain positive communication with the children at all times
- When communicating with children staff will ensure that they are understood and communicate at the child's level in a friendly positive and courteous manner.
- Use voice intonations, facial expressions, and explanations as methods of discipline
- Avoid shouting at children

To encourage children to take responsibility for their actions, staff will:

- initiate conversations with all children, and develop an understanding of the child and their interests
- form friendly and warm relationships with the children in their care and be supportive and encouraging
- ensure that expectations, relating to the children's behaviour is explicit and clear and consequences are consistently applied
- act as a role model for acceptable behaviour
- encourage and reward acceptable behaviour
- focus on the behaviour, not the child
- give praise and positive feedback to the children as often as possible
- provide an environment, which will foster the child's self esteem
- help children develop self-discipline skills through positive example and direction
- introduce older children to simple conflict resolution skills
- help children to appreciate and care for each other and their surroundings
- ensure that appropriate language is used at all times
- never single out any children or make them feel inadequate at any time
- avoid threatening or verbally abusing the children in any way

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CONSISTENT UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

(Unacceptable behaviour may be inclusive of breaching centre rules, swearing, disobeying instructions, harmful behaviour)

Where a child demonstrates consistent unacceptable behaviour the staff will:

- ensure the child is aware of the limits and what is appropriate behaviour
- ensure the expectations are appropriate for the child's level of development and understanding
- review the consequences to ensure they are not inadvertently encouraging the behaviour
- look for and assess possible causes for the behaviour
- discuss the issue with the parents and the child
- record all incidents, indicating what happened before and after the incident, time, date and who was involved

The child involved will be given (3) warnings for inappropriate behaviour which will be documented and signed. A child will then be given time out for a reasonable period of time.

- If the child's behaviour does not improve, after consultation with the Supervisor/s and Co-ordinator the child's primary carer will be contacted and notified of the child's behaviour to discuss appropriate resolutions.
- If the child physically hurts other children or adults the staff will:
 - remove the child from the situation
 - ensure the other person is all right and given proper attention and care
 - record the incident, indicating date, time, victim, injury, offender and attendant
 - ensure that both sets of caregivers are notified of the incident
 - consistent disruptions to the program may result in a child's exclusion from excursions and or the program

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EXCLUSION FOR UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

- Should unacceptable behaviour continue and the above strategies do not work the staff will inform the Co-ordinator.
- The Co-ordinator in consultation with the staff will discuss the issue.
- Where, in the interest of the child and other children at the Centre, exclusion is the seen as the only step to be taken this will be decided by the Council. It will be considered only after:
 - Parents have been notified and given the opportunity to discuss their child's behaviour.
 - Parents have been referred to other services, where necessary.
 - Careful consideration has been given to the problem by staff .

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SECTION E: PROGRAMMING

DAILY ROUTINES

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide daily routines that meet the needs of individual children in relation to each child's social, physical, intellectual, creative and emotional development.

As the Centre provides time for play and leisure, this will be reflected in the daily routines. Daily programs may be altered without notification due to extenuating circumstances.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 4.2 (Written programs)

PROCEDURE

- A daily routine will be discussed and organised by the Centre staff.
- The routine will reflect the Centres aims and objectives.
- The routine will be structured around regular events of the day such as arrival, departure, morning and afternoon tea, and lunch.
- The routine will provide a mixture of structured and unstructured activities.
- The routine will take into consideration all children's needs in relation to their emotional, social, physical, creative and developmental areas.
- Developing each child's own creative leisure skills will also be a consideration when planning the daily routine.
- The routine will be adapted to meet the varying and changing needs of the children in relation to seasonal conditions.
- The routine will be recorded and displayed where staff, parents and children can clearly view it.
- The routine will be flexible to meet the needs of the children and allow for spontaneity and enjoyment in the Centre.
- All daily routines are subject to change without notice due to weather and external factors.

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WRITTEN PROGRAMS

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to develop and implement a balanced program that is stimulating, interesting and exciting which allows opportunities for children to play, explore and develop new skills and is appropriate to the developmental and leisure needs of all children. Our centre's program will reflect the cultural diversity of today's society. Children and parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the planning and implementation and evaluation of the program.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 4.2 (Written programs)

PROCEDURE

- The Co-ordinator and staff members will be responsible for the development of a program, which meets the social, physical, recreational, intellectual, creative, emotional and developmental needs of the children attending.
- The written program will be prepared each week and be displayed for children and parents to view.
- Staff will encourage feedback and input from children and parents in relation to the program.
- All children's opinions will be considered.
- A written program for vacation care indicating excursion destinations and fees will be provided for the parents prior to the vacation care program.
- The program will be made available to any persons who wish to view it.
- The program will be flexible to meet the needs of the children and allow for spontaneity and enjoyment in the Centre.
- Staff will interact with children and where appropriate participate in activities and encourage children to try new activities.
- The program will be evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure it is meeting the needs of individual children and the families in the Centre.
- Special activities for specific age groups may be organised as part of the program according to need. They should be implemented where there are suitable numbers of children and adequate staffing levels can be maintained.

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The program is to:

- Promote the importance of play in the child's life
- Reflect the cultural and language diversity of the local and wider community
- Consider all developmental areas
- Consider the age range of children
- Consider individual and group interests, needs, skills, talents and abilities
- Be balanced providing a range of indoor/outdoor activities, quiet/active times and areas, structured/unstructured activities
- Provide a variety and choice of activities for the children
- Be stimulating, interesting and exciting, to allow for opportunities to explore and develop new skills
- Provide a variety of toys and equipment available to all children regardless of age or sex
- Foster children's independence and self help skills
- Foster friendships and encourage co-operative and responsible behaviour among children
- Provide children with opportunities for self-expression and self-direction
- Provide an environment, which will foster the child's self esteem
- Help children develop self-discipline skills through positive example and direction
- Help children to appreciate and care for each other and their surroundings
- Make the children feel welcomed and valued in the Centre

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GENDER EQUITY

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to help the children develop their full potential regardless of their gender.

All children will be treated in the same manner and provided with the same access to all materials and equipment.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 4.4 (range of equipment)

PROCEDURE

- Staff shall accept and value every parent and child regardless of gender or ability.
- Staff are to be aware of the way in which they treat individual children in regards to language, attitudes, assumption and expectation, and will treat all children in the same manner regardless of gender.
- Staff are to be aware of the way in which they treat individual parents and each other in regards to language, attitudes, assumption and expectation, and will treat all people in the same manner regardless of gender or lifestyle.
- The program will present positive experiences for the children, which are not based on gender role stereotypes.
- All children will be encouraged to try a variety of activities regardless of gender.
- Resource materials used in the Centre will as far as possible be non-stereotyped.
- Staff will provide a range of equipment, which is non-sexist and meets the needs of the children.
- Staff should act as positive role models encouraging children to be involved in activities commonly stereotyped for the opposite sex.
- Staff will be actively involved in a variety of activities regardless of gender.
- Every effort will be made to employ staff, relief staff and volunteers from both genders.

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CULTURAL RELEVANCE/ANTI-BIAS

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to recognise the diversity of cultures in Australia and help foster an awareness and acceptance of other cultures within each child, through the thoughtful integration of a variety of cultural activities in the program. All activities and behaviour in the centre will be considerate of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the families within the community. Children will be encouraged to explore and share a range of cultural activities and experiences in an environment free from racial prejudice and harassment.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Anti-Discrimination Act

PROCEDURE

- Staff shall accept and value every parent and child regardless of race, cultural background religion, gender or ability or sexual preference of parents.
- Staff will make themselves aware of the specific cultures represented in the families and general community of the Centre.
- No discrimination will be made against any family or child due to their culture, race or sexual preference.
- Staff will not be judgemental towards the parents and respect any differences in childcare practices (with the exception of child protection concerns).
- Staff will ensure parents have confidence in the Centre's quality of care for their child by seeking information regarding cultural issues.
- Staff will encourage feedback and input from parents in relation to the program, policies or other issues in the Centre, which are affected by the family's culture or race.
- Staff are encouraged to share knowledge of their own cultures with other staff, parents and children and to incorporate this into the program.
- Staff will make themselves aware of any issues or behaviour, which may be offensive to the various cultures and avoid possible offensive behaviour.
- Contact should be made with the SUPS team in the local area for support, assistance and ideas.

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- All activities and behaviour in the centre will be considerate of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the families within the community.
- Where possible parent information will be translated into other languages.
- Children will be encouraged to explore and share a range of cultural activities and experiences in an environment free from racial prejudice and harassment.
- Staff shall research and gain ideas regarding appropriate activities to be incorporated in the program.
- Staff should be aware of and ensure that festivals and celebrations of many cultures are included in the program.
- Cultural awareness should be integrated throughout all activities in the program and reflect an attitude of respect and positive appreciation for the differences in our society.
- All activities in the Centre will be checked to ensure that negative and discriminating images of particular cultures or lifestyles are avoided.

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EXCURSIONS

POLICY STATEMENT

We believe that excursions are an essential part of the Centre's program as they provide variety and an opportunity to expand a child's experience, explore different environments and learn new activities. Parents permission will be sought for all excursions. Children on excursions will be assured of proper supervision and care, for the full duration of the excursion. All National Standards and staff/child ratios will be maintained.

CONSIDERATIONS

- National Standards Section 4.7 (Excursions)
- National Standards Section 3.1 (staff/child ratios)
- Voluntary Code of Practice Appendix A (Excursions)
- Transport policy.
- Relevant transport legislation and regulations.

PROCEDURE

Planning

All excursions will be planned taking into consideration:

- the children's ages, capabilities and interests
- ways to maximise the children's developmental experiences and safety
- suitability of the venue and access including wheelchairs if required
- access to food, drink and other facilities
- weather conditions, which would make the venue unsuitable
- the specific clothing and equipment needs of the children
- travel arrangements needed

Authorisation and Notification

- No child will be taken outside the centre without the parent's written authorisation.
- All excursions will be publicised to all parents with full details of destination, times of departure and return, and what the children should bring.

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- Excursions may be cancelled at late notice due to weather or external factors. In the event that an excursion is cancelled, parents will be given a full refund in the form of a cheque.

Transportation

- Steps will be taken to ensure that all excursions comply with transport legislation and regulations.
- The transport policy will apply in relation to travelling to and from any venue.
- All staff, relief staff and volunteers on the excursion will be made aware of the transport policy and procedures for supervising and assisting children while travelling on public or private transport or on walking excursions.
- Particular attention will be made to assist children when boarding or alighting from public transport and when walking with children across roads or in crowded areas.

Staff Ratios and Supervision

- The staff/child ratios as outlined in the standards will be met at all times.
- There will be a maximum of 10 children to 1 supervisor for excursions.
- There will be a maximum of 6 children to 1 supervisor for swimming.
- Supervision is of utmost importance and must be maintained at all times.
- Children will be at all times in the care of a responsible staff member.
- It is the responsibility of the supervisor to maintain head counts and take the roll at appropriate times.
- Swimming excursions will only be undertaken with children over the age of eight and in a well-supervised municipal pool or water park.
- A special permission and ability description form is required for children who wish to swim on the excursion. (This is made available on the enrolment form)
- Dams, rivers and beaches are to be avoided for swimming purposes because of the dangers that they present.

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While on the Excursion

- In-Centre activities will be programmed for any children who are not attending the excursion.
- No changes to the excursion itinerary will be made unless it is in the best interest of the children's safety and wellbeing.
- All children will carry an identification tag indicating the centre's name and contact numbers. Under no circumstances should children have their names on badges.

Information and equipment to be taken on the excursion will include:

- a list of all children on the excursion, with relevant personal details and parent contact numbers, (A list of children on excursions will also be kept at the centre).
- a list of all relevant and emergency procedures and contact numbers, to be readily accessible to all staff at all times.
- a fully stocked portable first aid kit.
- The centre's emergency, accident, illness, medication and sun protection policies will be implemented on excursions as required.
- All children will be instructed regarding behaviour on the excursion and what to do if they are separated from the group.

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VIDEOS AND FILMS

POLICY STATEMENT

Films and videos can be used as part of the program of activities after thoughtful consideration relating to the content and message of the film. Staff will ensure all videos and films are suitable for the children's ages and that parent's permission has been given.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Film ratings from Australian Broadcasting Authority
- Voluntary Code of Practice Section 12 (Videos and Films)

PROCEDURE

- TV film and video will only be viewed that have a G or PG rating
- Videos or film may be planned as part of the program during vacation.
- Parents should be notified that G and PG rated videos may be shown and permission sought on the enrolment form.
- Staff should preview the film or video where possible.
- Children should continue to be provided with other activities during the showing of a video and be properly supervised, even if the majority of the children are attending the viewing.

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LOST PROPERTY

POLICY STATEMENT

City of Ryde does not take responsibility for items which are lost, stolen or damaged.

PROCEDURE

- Children are advised to refrain from bringing expensive items to the Centre. It is recommended that children do not bring 'Gameboys' or similar games to the Centre or on excursions.
- There is a lost property collection at the completion of each program. Lost property will be held at Council for a period of 4 weeks, after this period it will be donated to charity. Parents are requested to contact the Co-ordinator within 4 weeks to claim any lost belongings.
- To avoid items being lost parents are encouraged to label all belongings clearly.
- Parents may make a request for lost property verbally. If the requested item/s are located the parent will be notified via telephone or email and advised of an appropriate collection time.
- If the requested item/s are not located the parent will be notified in writing.