

Parent Information Fact Sheet 7

St. Andrew's Outside School Hours Care

OSHC IN THE COMMUNITY

St. Andrew's OSHC is managed for and on behalf of the Grovely Catholic Parish by Centacare Child Care Services. St. Andrew's OSHC provides a service to the families of St. Andrew's Catholic School and aims to provide a service that supports the care needs of families.

OSHC has been providing care to families in the community at Ferny Grove for the past 17 years. It is important that OSHC has links with the local and broader community to ensure that the service does not operate in isolation from the community and is able to respond to the Communities needs.

The centre recognises the importance of involvement within the local community. We will endeavour to participate in industry related activities within the local area (e.g. local network meetings), use local services and facilities wherever possible (e.g. shops, community groups, etc), invite involvement from local service providers, politicians, schools, etc as appropriate and participate in local community events (e.g. fundraisers, etc) as appropriate. We invite feedback and comment from local stakeholders through our Advisory Committee and endeavour to act on community feedback to improve the quality of the service we offer.

Staff are encouraged to network within the local parish or school community and to seek out information from peak bodies, experts and authorities to support their service delivery. Where possible, staff may attend different school functions to demonstrate their support of the children within their school community.

When children feel connected with the community they live in, their sense of wellbeing is enhanced. Outside school hours care (OSHC) services have an important role to play in encouraging children to feel a part of their community and in supporting them to make a contribution to it. OSHC services will be well placed to meet the needs of children and families if they develop links, share information and work collaboratively with others in their community.

Children, families and staff in OSHC services bring a background of relationships with families, friends and their broader community. Their community can consist of people that they interact with and have relationships with regularly and can also include the broader associations they have with cultural, religious and sporting groups. These existing connections form the foundations for promoting links with the community in OSHC services.
By Sonja Tansey for NCAC

History of Centacare Child Care Services

Over the last 20 years in response to demand from parents and with the encouragement of government, parishes have established Child Care Services [CCS] with the assistance of government funding. There are now over 90 CCS operating in parishes of the Archdiocese that are managed through Centacare.

In recent years there has been a substantial increase in the legislative obligations for parishes operating CCS. Licensing of each CCS by the State Government, employment laws, Workplace Health & Safety Legislation, Commission for Children & Young People Act and the introduction of GST are examples of these laws which place enormous pressure on parishes and people by requiring much more accountability and compliance.

Each CCS is owned by the parish and operates through the sponsorship of the Archdiocese which is necessary to secure government financial support for parents and facilitate essential licensing and accreditation processes.

Advisory Committees

Every CCS operation will be encouraged to establish an Advisory Committee to provide advice to the CCS and Centacare in relation to local issues. The Advisory Committee plays an important role in ensuring that the parish, parents, the school, the CCS and Centacare are effectively communicating and collaborating for the betterment of the CCS facility.

The Advisory Committee meets once per term and provides opportunities for key stakeholders to provide valuable feedback on the operation of the centre. Ideas from these meetings can there be incorporated and concerns raised can be addressed and outcomes implemented to improve service delivery.