

# NORTHERN RIVERS OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE

A division of

NORTHERN RIVERS CHILDREN'S SERVICES LIMITED

A not-for-profit community service organisation operating since 1980

## Parent Information Booklet



## Outside School Hours Care

Revised January 2021

# NORTHERN RIVERS CHILDREN'S SERVICES LIMITED

A not-for-profit community service organisation operating since 1980

<b>Office Hours:</b>	<b>Monday to Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm</b>
<b>Postal Address:</b>	<b>PO Box 521, Lismore NSW 2480</b>
<b>Office Address:</b>	<b>150 Laurel Avenue, Lismore NSW 2480</b>
<b>Office Telephone:</b>	<b>02 6621 6437</b>
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<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:lismore.admin@nracs.org.au">lismore.admin@nracs.org.au</a> <a href="mailto:ceo@nracs.org.au">ceo@nracs.org.au</a>
<b>Fee Enquiries:</b>	<a href="mailto:taylor.mcpherson@nracs.org.au">taylor.mcpherson@nracs.org.au</a>
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://nracs.org.au">nracs.org.au</a>
<b>Bangalow OSHC</b>	<b>0427 540 023</b>
<b>Bexhill OSHC</b>	<b>0447 278 238</b>
<b>Clunes OSHC</b>	<b>0437 362 834</b>
<b>Dunoon OSHC</b>	<b>0407 332 348</b>
<b>Jiggi After School Care</b>	<b>02 6688 8221</b>
<b>Lismore Heights OSHC</b>	<b>0437 553 057</b>
<b>Lismore South OSHC</b>	<b>0414 230 536</b>

## **Outside School Hours Care Service Philosophy**

At Outside School Hours Care we aim to provide a quality environment for school age children in our service. We aim to work closely in partnership with families, their children, other staff members, professionals and the local community to provide a quality program which respects and values the individual differences of the children, their families and the community.

In providing opportunities for children to further develop a sense of identity, staff work closely with all children and families by using reflective practises to ensure they are providing an environment that is accepting diversity, individual interests and needs. Experiences incorporated within the program aim to promote cooperative learning amongst the children and the staff, as well as promoting sustainable practises whenever possible to assist the children to connect and contribute within their world. In valuing and incorporating these attributes within the service, staff aim to provide opportunities for the children to explore, develop curiosity, use their own creativity and above all develop a sense of belonging, being and becoming.

At Outside School Hours Care we aim to be sympathetic and supportive to the different needs of individual children and their families to help ensure that we are providing an environment that is a positive enjoyable experience for all involved.

## Northern Rivers Children's Services Limited is:

- An independent, non-profit Association which complies with all State & Commonwealth childcare service requirements.
- Partially funded by the Commonwealth Government.
- Managed by a voluntary Board comprised of Parents/Guardians and Educators who are elected at the Annual General Meeting, and the Chief Executive Officer.
- Coordinated by experienced and qualified staff.
- Responsible for the administration of Commonwealth Government Child Care Subsidy.

OSHC Services providing Before and/or After School and/or Vacation Care operates at the public primary schools in Bangalow, Bexhill, Clunes, Dunoon, Jiggi, Lismore Heights and Lismore South.

One staff member is employed per a maximum of 15 children. As the majority of our services are at small schools, at most times there is only one Coordinator on duty. This situation poses additional responsibilities and potential difficulties for staff (see Behaviour Management section). We aim to employ staff with qualifications and experience in the care of children. Staff are also supported by NRCS management and senior staff.

**Booking Procedures – all children need to be enrolled at the OSHC service before they attend. A one-off enrolment fee of \$10 will be charged.**

**Before School Care and After School Care – Please see individual Service for hours of operation.**

- Permanent bookings may be made weekly.
- Casual bookings can be made on any day if the child has been previously enrolled. These bookings need to be made to the Coordinator. Children without an enrolment form cannot be accepted in the service for legal reasons.

### **Vacation Care (8:00am to 6:00pm)**

- Programs will be made available in the weeks proceeding each holiday period and are available on our website - [nracs.org.au](http://nracs.org.au).
- Advance bookings are essential. If there are more bookings than available places, then priority will be given as per government guidelines (see next page).
- Once a permanent booking is made, fees will be charged for those days, including for any absences. One week notice of change of bookings is required.

### **Payment of Fees**

- The cost of care is set to cover operational costs and is related to the number of children using the service from year to year.
- Fees cover the whole before school or after school session or the whole vacation care day. **There are no hourly or half day fees.**
- Please ask the service Coordinator for the current permanent session rates.
- Casual days are charged at an additional \$2 for before school & \$3 for after school.
- **Families are liable for the full fees of session costs. Your eligibility for Child Care Subsidy is a matter for you to establish. Parents/Guardians who do not have a Child Care Subsidy percentage must pay the full fee.**
- Payment terms are strictly 7 days. Fees are to be paid weekly and must be kept up to date.
- Fees can be paid either to the OSHC Service Coordinator, or at our head office at 150 Laurel Avenue Lismore (EFTPOS available), or by credit card over the phone 6621 6437, or by direct debit (details on weekly invoice) (preferred method).
- Invoices for permanent and casual care will be emailed weekly. A dated receipt will be provided for each payment other than direct debit.
- All records will be kept confidential and stored appropriately.
- **Fees are to be paid for all the days the child is booked into the Service, including times when the child is absent due to illness.** A half fee will be charged for permanent booking absences if 24hours notice is given. Casual bookings will not incur a fee if cancellation is made more than 12 hours prior to booking. A full fee will apply for a same day cancellation.
- 7 days notice is required for changes to permanent bookings or full payment will be due.
- Vacation Care - Absences will incur a full fee if no notice is given. 24hours notice will incur a half fee. 7 days notice is required for changes to bookings or charges will apply.
- No fees are due for permanent bookings falling on a public holiday or pupil free day unless care is provided.

- Holiday absences – if 7 days' notice is given a half fee is charged. If no notice is given the full fee will be due
- Incursion/excursion fees: when applicable will be added to your weekly invoice. Incursion/excursion do not attract CCS. The written Parent/Guardian permission for the incursion/excursion is acceptance of the fee to be charged. Vacation care incursions/excursions costs are based on bookings. If your child is absent on the day of the incursion/ excursion, and the appropriate notice hasn't been provided, you will be charged the full excursion fee – 7 days' notice incurs no charge, 24 hours' notice will incur half of the excursion cost (where applicable).
- When applicable items of clothing provided by the service and not returned in a clean condition will incur an appropriate charge.

## Overdue Fees

Parents/Guardians are urged to pay their fees even if they have not received an invoice, fee estimates can be given by contacting the NRCS office. Coordinators will accept any payment, and it will be credited to your account. Regular payments will ensure that debts cannot accumulate.

**After 1 week overdue:** The Coordinator will raise issue of payment with families. A reminder letter will be emailed to families.

**After 2 weeks overdue:** If no payment plan arrangements have been made to pay the fees, or the agreement made has not been kept, the child's place will be suspended. The Coordinator will not accept the child into care.

**Debt recovery procedures will follow.**

## Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Families must apply through Centrelink for CCS. Parents/Guardians are advised to apply for CCS prior to enrolling their child in care or in the week that care commences. Full fees will be charged until the application has been processed. You will be asked to confirm the enrolment in Centrelink for your specific OSHC when the enrolment is established. Failure to do so will mean your CCS is not applied to our service and full fees will apply.

## Priority of Access for Child Care Places

Our service will be available for:

- Children who currently attend primary school.
- No one will be discriminated against on the basis of his or her cultural background, religion, sex, disability, marital status or income.
- The service will support children with additional needs within its operational capacity.
- The service will follow the Commonwealth Government Priority of access guidelines.
- Children in a lower priority category may be required to vacate their child care place or to reduce their hours to make room for a child in the higher priority categories. Two weeks notice will be given in the rare case that this is required.

First Priority: A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.

Second Priority: A child whose parents/guardians are working or studying. As determined by Centrelink (i.e. children eligible for 100 hours of care per Fortnight).

Third Priority: Any other child.

## Picking up your Child

- Please make sure your child is collected by 6pm, as extra charges apply after that time. Please call your Coordinator if there is going to be a late pickup.
- **Only those persons nominated on the child's enrolment form will be allowed to collect the child. Parents/Guardians are required to nominate on their enrolment form those persons permitted to collect the child and to keep those details current.**
- When a new person is to collect the child, prior notification in writing is to be made by the parent. Photo ID will be required at collection.
- Where there is a contact and residency order in place, a copy must be provided to the Coordinator. This must also remain current. Verbal requests by one parent that the other parent must not collect their child cannot be adhered to without a corresponding court order. Legally, we cannot prevent a parent from having access to his/her children unless we have a copy of a current court order.
- If a child remains in care after the agreed collection time the Coordinator will endeavor to locate the parent by telephone, failing that, the emergency contact numbers will be called. Where this procedure is unsuccessful the Department of Community Service and/or the local police will be contacted.
- **Always sign your child in or out whenever you are at the service.**

## **News Bulletin / Emails**

Periodic Bulletins or emails are published/sent for parents/guardians. These are aimed at keeping you informed and up-to-date on relevant topics such as child health, safety, nutrition and development. In addition, administrative and policy changes are routinely relayed. Information can also be found on our website [nracs.org.au](http://nracs.org.au) and go to the OSHC section.

## **Grievance Procedure**

We will support the right of staff, parents/guardians and children to make complaints about the service without fear of reprisal. If a parent has a complaint about the service, they should initially talk to the Coordinator to discuss their concern and come to a resolution.

If the complaint is not handled to the parent's satisfaction, they should discuss the issue with the NRCS CEO, either in writing or verbally. The CEO will discuss the issue with the Coordinator and develop a strategy for resolving the problem. The Coordinator or scheme CEO will inform the parent of what has been decided regarding the issue. Unresolved matters may be put in writing to the President, Northern Rivers Children's Services Limited.

## **Food & Nutrition**

Children are expected to bring their own nutritious snacks and lunch. Food may also be prepared and served as part of an activity. Drinking water is provided at all times. Food sensitivities, allergies, religious and cultural considerations and health needs of the child must be discussed between the staff and the parent. A written plan may be needed. Religious and cultural festivals offer the opportunity for experiencing diversity through the sharing of food. Children are encouraged to accept and value differences.

## **Excursions and Outings**

Excursions during vacation care are an integral part of the OSHC program. In planning excursions, primary consideration is given to safety. Where excursions involve proximity to any body of water, staff must ensure that the adult/child ratio is one adult for each 5 children. A first aid kit, emergency numbers and mobile phone are required on all excursions. All Excursions must be approved in writing by a parent by signing a completed Excursion Risk Management Form.

Parents/Guardians are provided with a completed and approved Risk Assessment where written authorisation is sought by parent. Risk Assessments are required for all excursions, including routine outings. Risk Assessments detail the proposed activity, potential hazards, how risks will be eliminated or minimised, and an evaluation after the Activity. No excursion or outing is permitted unless a Risk Assessment has been completed and approved by the OSHC Supervisor.

## **Sun Protection**

OSHC has a "have hat will play" policy. However, since OSHC occurs in early mornings & late afternoons, many outdoor areas pose a low UV risk, especially during non-summer months. Coordinators will assess the need for protective clothing throughout the year.

- OSHC will ensure that children have access to shaded play areas whilst attending OSHC. Activities are set up in shady areas where possible.
- Staff will encourage children to wear hats which protect the face, and preferably the neck and ears when outdoor play poses a significant UV exposure risk.
- Parents/Guardians should provide hats and shirts with collars and sleeves during Vacation Care.
- Children are encouraged to cover exposed skin with sunscreen as required.
- Co-ordinators will discourage children from playing in the sun during peak UV times, between 11am and 3pm, without a hat, protective clothing and sunscreen.
- Staff will model sun safe practices to children by wearing hats, sleeved tops, applying sunscreen when in the sun and providing ongoing sun safe education for children.

## **Programming**

Staff work in partnership with the 'My Time, Our Place' framework which is based on children learning through play and takes into consideration the children's individual stages of development, their interests and their backgrounds. We encourage all areas of development, social, emotional, creative, physical, & intellectual. Children's and parent's input into programming ideas is always sought. Children are provided with opportunities to make friends, play games, create things, relax, do homework and learn new skills. There are organised activities, and children can choose to make their own fun within the guidelines and rules of the service.

## **Discipline Policy**

Because the OSHC Coordinator is usually the only adult present, children's behaviour must be cooperative if safety is to be maintained. These following behaviours are considered **unacceptable**.

- **Punching, kicking or any other physical violence**
- **Bullying/intimidating behaviour (name calling and teasing etc)**
- **Deliberately damaging property or equipment**
- **Swearing or continued arguing with staff**
- **Abusing staff and children verbally**
- **Refusal to comply with staff requests**

Staff will endeavour to create an atmosphere of respect and cooperation through positive and caring interactions with all children and providing each child with a range and choice of interesting activities. Each child will be given an opportunity to express their views and have input into the daily routine and OSHC rules. If after appropriate discussion and negotiation, a child's behaviour is unacceptable, the Coordinator will discipline the child by excluding them from activities. Parents/Guardians will be informed on the day of the incident. If the behaviour continues, then parents/guardians may be asked to remove the child from OSHC. Strategies and plans will be required to be discussed and implemented for any ongoing unacceptable behavioural issues. Unacceptable behaviours may result in care being suspended.

## **Health and Safety**

Northern Rivers Children's Services OSHC observes health and hygiene practices that reflect best-practice standards, and are in accordance with relevant government guidelines, in order to minimise risks to children, and encourage children to learn these practices. OSHC Coordinators cannot care for a child unless he/she is in good health and free from any medical condition or dependency on medication that may affect the child's capacity to participate in the program without a risk to other children or adults.

## **Illness, accident and emergency treatment**

NRCS cannot enrol a child unless a parent has given written authorisation for the scheme to seek urgent medical, dental or hospital treatment or ambulance service, in the event that such action is deemed to be necessary by the Coordinator. If safe, the Coordinator will first attempt to call a parent before arranging emergency medical care. Otherwise, a parent will be contacted immediately after emergency medical care has been arranged. Any associated medical or transportation costs will be paid by the child's parent.

## **Medication in OSHC**

A Medication Permission Authority must be signed by the parent (daily) prior to a Coordinator administering any medication required by a child in care. This applies to prescription and non-prescription medications (including herbal remedies).

## **Medical Conditions**

For any medical condition NRCS require parents/guardians at enrolment to complete a Health Management, Risk Minimisation & Communication Plan (HM, RM & CP) that provides staff with adequate health information for the effective management of their child's medical conditions (Reg 90).

## **Exclusion of children from OSHC due to illness**

Exclusion of sick children from childcare is an important way of limiting the spread of infection in childcare. Families are encouraged to consider in advance what arrangements need to be made in the event that their children become sick and cannot attend care. Appropriate exclusion of sick children, in conjunction with effective hygiene procedures, will reduce cross infection. It is in everyone's interest to abide by recommended exclusion periods. Children with infectious diseases will be excluded from OSHC in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's Guidelines.

In 2020, NRCS Limited. operated the following services:

**1. Northern Rivers Family Day Care.** The largest Family Day Care Scheme in NSW, spanning from Tweed Heads to South of Lismore. The service also covers Murwillumbah, Alstonville, Casino, Kingscliff, Kyogle, Pottsville, Coraki, Nimbin and surrounding areas.

**2. The Nimbin Early Learning Centre.** An innovative service offering child to adult ratios of 5:1 for ages 0-5 years. The service operates with 15 children per day and is located on the community grounds of the old Nimbin public school.

**3. Northern Rivers In Home Care.** This service spans the area from Tweed Heads to South of Lismore, including the coastal areas of Byron and Ballina Shires. IHC is regulated and monitored childcare in the child's home. It is targeted at children in isolated circumstances where no other formal care is available, for families with an adult or child with a disability, multiple births, or non-mainstream childcare needs.

**4. Ready Set Go Project.** Communication and social skills outreach therapy program. The program is funded by the Australian Government. It provides preschools, childcare centres and Family Day Care in Lismore with mobile Speech, Occupation and behaviour Therapists. In addition, Specialist early childhood teachers provide child carers and parents/guardians with support and advice regarding the development of children with additional needs. Linked to this program is a free childcare transport service and additional fee relief.

**5. Gingerbread House** offers occasional care, taking children from 6 weeks to 6 years. We are open from 8am to 5pm and can take children for as little as one hour or for more extended periods. Gingerbread House has trained experienced staff who offer a daily program for children in a friendly, safe, well-equipped environment, close to the CBD and Lismore Square.

## Helpful Contacts

Poisons Information:	13 11 26	Immunisation information:	1800 671 811
Lismore Base Hospital:	6621 8000	Community Services Helpline:	132 111
Child & Family Health:	6625 0111	Community Services Lismore:	6623 4900
Family Support Network:	6621 2489	Kids Help Line:	1800 551 800
Parent Line:	1300 130 052	Aboriginal Health:	6621 4366
Oral Health:	1300 651 625	Mandatory Reporting:	132 111
Centrelink:	136 150	State Emergency Services:	132 500
Wires (snake remover)	1300 094 737		

**In the event of an emergency evacuation – parents/guardians will be contacted and notified of pick up area.**

The OSHC Coordinator reserves the right to exclude a child who is obviously too unwell and cannot be adequately cared for in the OSHC Environment.

Condition	Exclusion of Cases	Exclusion of Contact
Diarrhea	Exclude until diarrhea has cease for 24 hours.	Contacts not excluded.
Chicken Pox	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least five days after the eruption first appears <b>and all blisters have dried</b> . Note that some remaining scabs are not a reason for continued exclusion.	Any child with an immune deficiency or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded.
Conjunctivitis (Sticky Eye)	Exclusion until discharge from eyes has ceased.	Contacts not excluded.
Haemophilus type b (Hib)	Exclude until medical certificate is received.	Contacts not excluded.
Hand, Foot and mouth disease (cocksackie B)	Exclude from care whilst there is fluid in the blisters. NB The virus remains active in the faeces for several weeks, therefore excellent hand washing techniques and cleaning procedures are essential.	Contacts not excluded.
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before seven days after the onset of jaundice or illness.	Contacts not excluded.
Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing.	Contacts not excluded.
Measles	Exclude for at least four days after appearance of rash. If un-immunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of their first contact with the first case, they may return to care.	Un-immunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case.
Meningitis (bacterial)	Exclude until well.	Contacts not excluded.
Meningococcal Infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed.	Contacts not excluded if receiving rifampicin.
Mumps	Exclude for nine days or until swelling goes down	Contacts not excluded.
Rashes	Exclude until medical certificate provided indicates the rash is non-infectious.	Contacts not excluded.
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (lice), trachoma	Re-admit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced. Dead eggs may still be present when the child is no longer infested and dead nits need not be removed.	Contacts not excluded Unless infested.
Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash.	Contacts not excluded.
Streptococcal infection (Including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received Antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well.	Contacts not excluded.
Temperatures of unknown origin	If a child has a temperature the parent is to be contacted, the approved medication administered, and the child is to be tepid sponged.	Contacts not excluded.
Thrush and mouth ulcers	Do not exclude, hygienic practice must be a priority.	Contacts not excluded.
Whooping cough	Where a known outbreak has occurred, children presenting with symptoms such as cough and fever should be excluded and tested immediately as a precautionary measure. If diagnosed, exclude until they have taken five days of antibiotics or twenty-one days from onset of coughing.	Exclude un-immunized household contact aged less than 7 years for 14 days after the last exposure to infection or until they have taken five days of a 10-day course of antibiotics.

A Comprehensive Policy document is located in your OSHC Service and at the NRCS Coordination Unit.