Sydney Catholic early childhood services

OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE

Family handbook

Our Values

Act with kindness

Thoughtful
Careful
Gentle

Act with integrity

Honesty
Trustworthy
Selfless

Be inspirational

Innovative
Pasionate
Curious

Be intentional

Child centred
Professional
Committed

Be joy filled

Inclusive
Celebratory
Wellbeing focused

Sydney Catholic early childhood services

WELCOME

Dear Families,

On behalf of the entire team at Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services (SCECS), I extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to you and your family to our OSHC family.

We are thrilled to have you join us as part of our community and we look forward to partnering with you in providing a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment for your children.

At SCECS, we understand the importance of quality out-of-school hours care in supporting the holistic development of children. Our dedicated team are committed to ensuring that each child feels valued, respected and supported as they engage in a variety of enriching experiences and activities. Our OSHC programs are designed to promote learning, creativity and social interaction in a fun and inclusive environment.

From engaging in arts and crafts to participating in sports and games, your child will have the opportunity to explore their interests, develop new skills and build meaningful friendships.

We believe that fostering strong, collaborative and respectful relationships with families and communities is paramount to enhancing children's inclusion, learning and overall wellbeing.

As CEO of SCECS, I am personally committed to upholding the highest standards of excellence in all aspects of our OSHC programs. We prioritise the safety and well-being of every child in our care, and we adhere to strict guidelines and protocols to ensure a secure and nurturing environment at all times.

I encourage you to explore our Family Handbook, also available on our website at www.scecs.nsw.edu.au, which provides detailed information about our OSHC services, policies and procedures.

Our team is always available to answer any questions you may have and provide support as needed.

We are honored to have you with us and we look forward to building a strong and positive partnership with you and your family.

Warm regards,

Franceyn O'Connor
CEO

SERVICE INFORMATION

About Us

Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Service is a not-for-profit service catering for children and families from the Catholic school and local area. Our services provide quality education and care for school aged children, offering a healthy menu and an engaging program aimed at all ages and abilities of the children. SCECS is committed to ensuring children's safety, welfare and wellbeing are paramount in all decisions and actions.

BOOKINGS & ATTENDANCE

TYPES OF CARE AVAILABLE

Permanent Bookings are for families requiring the same days of care each week. These bookings can't be cancelled or changed unless the changes are ongoing, we do not accept day swaps, pauses for holidays or other one-off cancellations, even for sickness or injury. If a child with a permanent booking is absent, fees will still be charged.

Ongoing changes to permanent bookings must be requested in writing via email, giving two weeks notice. After this period, fees will be adjusted accordingly. Permanent booking changes cannot be made via the app or over the phone, this includes SMS. Additional days will be accommodated wherever possible and the commencement date of the booking will be confirmed in writing.

Please note, CCS will not be applied for any absences before your child's first day OR after your child's last physical attendance. This means you will be charged full fees for this period.

Casual Bookings are available for families who require sessions on an irregular basis. Families can make casual bookings depending upon availability. Every effort will be made to accommodate requests however, the service reserves the right to decline a casual booking when places are not available or staffing ratios are unable to be met. Families who wish to cancel a casual booking must notify the service the day before by 5.00pm.

Any cancellations after this time will be charged the normal casual booking fee. Casual bookings can be requested via the app or by emailing the service. The app has a cut off for casual bookings one day prior. Please note that all casual bookings requested by email and the app MUST be confirmed by a staff member before the child can attend.

Unless arranged by written agreement casual bookings will not be accepted if fees are outstanding for prior bookings.

Vacation Care is available at some services during school holiday periods and on staff development days. SCECS carefully plans an exciting and varied vacation care program.

SCECS vacation care programs are developed to offer families a mix of excursion day options, targeted workshops based on children's interests and educator-led in house fun days.

Vacation Care

We encourage families to book earlier so that SCECS can roster and plan the program accordingly.

Bookings may be cancelled at any time by giving 7 days' notice to SCECS. Bookings cancelled on less than 7 days' notice, will be charged the gap fee, inclusive of extras. This is due to our 3rd party suppliers requiring deposits and guarantees to our planned activities and ensuring our services are staffed and resourced well.

Breakfast (up to 8:15am) and afternoon tea are included in the daily rate and children bring their own morning tea and lunch unless otherwise advised.

Late bookings for Vacation Care on incursion/excursion days may not be permitted if spaces are unavailable. Please speak to your service Coordinator to confirm if your late booking can be accommodated.

Absent Notification

It is SCECS' responsibility to report on your child's attendance, so it is important to notify the staff if your child will be absent. You can notify the service of an absence via the app, email, voicemail, or text during the day.

It is important to make staff aware, so there is no unnecessary stress and time spent locating your child. A search fee is payable for unnotified absences on After School Care. Parents are required to pay for a permanent booking when their child is absent.

Drop Off and Pick Up Requirements **SIGN IN / OUT**

To ensure all our children are safe, it is a part of the regulations and insurance requirements, that ALL CHILDREN must be signed in when they arrive and signed out when they leave by an authorised person. In the case of before care, staff will sign the child out and for aftercare, staff will sign your child into the service. The person signing children out must be 18 years or over and must be listed as an authorised person. Should a child leave the school grounds whilst at OSHC, the staff will put in place the relevant procedures (see delivery and collection policy). Please remind your child/ren they are never to leave the service or school grounds whilst attending, until they have been collected by an authorised person.

Collection of Children AFTER SCHEDULED CLOSE

If your child has not been collected by closing time and no contact has been made by the parent / guardian to inform staff, the staff will take the following steps:

- attempt to contact parent/guardians
- if unsuccessful, emergency contacts on enrolment form will be contacted
- 30 minutes after scheduled close - if no contact has been made, the staff will contact Department of Community and Justice and the Police. Staff will be under instruction from Department of Community and Justice and the SCECS Operations Team
- a phone call will be made to the SCECS Operations Manager to notify them of the situation

Late Fees

0 - 15 minutes late: $50.00
Every 5 minutes thereafter: $10.00

Late fee applies per child.
Repeated late collections may jeopardise your child's enrolment.

Search fee

Unnotified Absence: $5.00

Search fee applies per child and is applied when families do not notify the service in advance of their child's absence.

Child Care Subsidy

Families may be eligible to apply for the Child Care Subsidy (CCS). It is income and activity tested (i.e. based on hours of work or study) and paid directly to the childcare services to reduce the fees that eligible families pay. Families are required to keep Centrelink up to date with activity information to optimise payments and continue to be eligible for the Child Care Subsidy.

Once you have contacted Centrelink, you will need to provide the centre with your Parent and Child Customer Reference Number (CRN) to claim CCS. Once an enrolment has been created at the service, parents will need to confirm the details on the myGov website. Centrelink withhold 5% of all subsidy payments which is reconciled with families at the end of the financial year. No CCS will be payable where children are absent on the first and last day/s of care they are booked in. If your child is not in attendance for a period of 14 weeks your CCS will cease, and you will need to reconfirm this before you are able to begin claiming CCS at SCECS again.

Please note, Centrelink may cancel your Child Care Subsidy if any required actionable items are overdue e.g. Tax returns, and activity/ income estimates. Centrelink may use a portion of families Child Care Subsidy to re-pay an owing debt on Centrelink's end. Centrelink will cancel your Child Care Subsidy if your child has not attended a CCS approved service in 26 weeks, families will be required to resubmit a claim for CCS.

SCECS is unable to advise families why their Child Care Subsidy has been cancelled, families will need to contact Centrelink in instances where entitlements have changes or are no longer existent. Failure to pay the gap fee can jeopardise your eligibility to receive CCS from Centrelink.

Centrelink Office Ph: 13 61 50.
When registering with Centrelink please quote the following provider number: PR-40022356

Direct Debit

All fees are paid by Direct Debit, fortnightly in advance on Thursdays. An invoice will be received by families on Wednesdays (24 hours prior to the direct debit processing).

Payments will be debited from the family's nominated account. Strict regulations are followed to ensure that this information is confidential.

Please ensure you have sufficient funds in your account to cover your fortnightly childcare fees. If you have insufficient funds when your Direct Debit is due, please contact the service in writing by close of business on the Wednesday of the Direct Debit week.

Any failed direct debit payments will automatically be retried. Direct Debit rejections incur a dishonour fee payable by the parent.

Please note we do not accept Amex cards. Bank, Visa/Mastercard transaction fees are no longer charged.

Late Payments and Termination of Placement

We are here to support families, and parents are encouraged to discuss any difficulties they may have in paying fees with staff, who will discuss the matter with the SCECS Finance Manager. Applications for arrangements in the event of financial hardship should be made to SCECS in writing. If no previous arrangements have been made regarding late payment of fees, SCECS is entitled to terminate the child's placement after giving one week's written notice.

In the event that fees are late due to direct debits being declined because of insufficient funds, SCECS will send one reminder email. At the end of two weeks, the child's placement will be ended.

In the event of reminder letters being issued more than twice in any 2 month period, SCECS reserves the right to terminate a placement without further reminders.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Invoice / Statements

Invoice/statements are available any time via the app.

All operational policies and procedures are available to families on request.

Medical Conditions and Developmental Information

For children with a medical condition, an Action Plan prepared by a GP must be provided to the service along with any related medication prior to commencing. The family should also complete a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan together with the service Coordinator and read and sign the service's Medical Conditions Policy.

No medication, including non-prescription drugs and paracetamol, will be administered without one or both of the following:

- a doctor's or medical practitioner's written authorisation, i.e. Doctor's Certificate
- a management plan provided by a medical practitioner.

The parent/guardian must complete and date an Administration of Medication form before medication is to be administered. Medication must be provided in original packaging/ containers.

In order to best support children's needs, parents/guardians are required to disclose diagnoses or developmental concerns and provide supporting therapy or specialist information from medical professionals.

Entertainment & Devices

On occasions, movies may be offered for viewing. All movies will be either G or PG rated.

SCECS has a no device policy for play during the OSHC session. Personal video games, mobile phones, smart watches and any other personal electronic devices or toys are not permitted whilst attending SCECS OSHC.

If children bring personal items to OSHC, SCECS cannot be held responsible for their safety.

Parent Portal

SCECS policies and procedures are available in the parent portal on the SCECS website. Ask the coordinator of the service for the password or find it on the sign at the service entrance.

DURING THE SESSION

Breakfast/Afternoon Tea and Snacks

A range of nutritional, healthy foods are provided for breakfast and afternoon tea. We are guided by the Eat Smart Play Smart (ESPS) manual. Each session, we offer a mix of different coloured, in season, fruit and vegetables, wholemeal breads, and cereals, heart-healthy lean protein and dairy products such as cheese and yoghurt. We are allergy aware.

Routines and Activities

We work with children and families to develop an engaging program to ensure that children's specific interests are captured to make their time at SCECS as fun as possible. SCECS takes a child-centred approach to programming, and provides a mix of educational, play and leisure-based programs. We encourage families to provide feedback and suggestions. Additionally, educators also conduct spontaneous activities based on the direction of the children throughout the session.

Most commonly the afterschool care session will begin with afternoon tea and then children are free to move between the various learning environments that have been set up or engage in outdoor activities. Each service is unique, and therefore service routines vary based on child, parent and community feedback.

Homework

We understand that time at home is precious and to support our families, we set up a well-resourced space and allow time in our afternoon routine for homework. We work together in partnership with parents to support your child's homework needs. If children are required to use electronic devices to complete their homework, they may do so, in small groups after 5:00pm where staff can closely supervise the children. Children and their families are asked to sign an 'acceptable use of technology form' before children can use their device at the service.

PARENT CONDUCT

SCECS values its staff and has an obligation to provide a safe and harassment free working environment for them as well as the children who are enrolled at the service.
It is never acceptable to treat staff or children aggressively or to harass or threaten them.

Please refer to our Parent Code of Conduct found in the parent portal on our website.

Commitment to Child Safety

Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services (SCECS) is committed to being a child safe organisation and has developed strategies for embedding the child safe standards into our governance structures and practices at a service level.

SCECS has zero tolerance for child abuse.

INCLUSION SUPPORT

The service creates an environment where all children can actively participate and benefit from all aspects of the learning program reducing any barriers towards full inclusion. We take an inclusive approach working in collaboration with families and professionals. This support is carefully developed in consultation with the family, educators and the SCECS Inclusion team to develop Individual Support Plans or Behaviour Support Plans.

Behaviour

Physical aggression towards another person at OSHC will be addressed and escalated to our Inclusion Team. Should an incident occur, an incident report will be completed, and the incident discussed with the parent/guardian. The Inclusion Team will assess whether a support plan will be required.

COMPLAINTS

Procedures

SCECS supports your right to communicate your concerns and try to resolve them at the local level. A complaint can be informal or formal. It can be anything which you or your child thinks is unfair or which makes you unhappy with the service.

All confidential conversations with parents/children will take place in a quiet place away from other children, parents or staff. If you or your child has a complaint or comment about the service, you are encouraged to talk to the Coordinator who will arrange a time to discuss your concern and come to a resolution to address the issue.

Please refer to our Complaint Procedure for Families, found in the parent portal on our website.

If the complaint is not handled to your satisfaction at this level, please inform SCECS Management:

Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services
38 Renwick Street
Leichhardt NSW 2040
Phone: 02 9568 8628
Email: scecs@syd.catholic.edu.au

If you are not satisfied after using the above steps, you can contact the Regulatory Authority:

NSW Early Learning Commission
Locked Bag 5107
Parramatta NSW 2124
Phone: 1800 619 113 (toll free)
Email: information@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au

"Prayer Leads Us Forward in Hope."

POPE FRANCIS

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done."

PHILLIPIANS 4:6

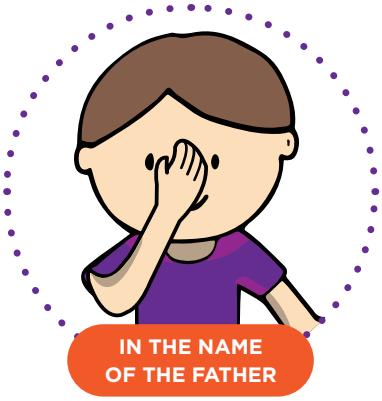
PRAYER

Prayer is talking and listening to God. God wants us to talk to Him and his Mother Mary all the time. Talking to God and His Mother Mary is the best way of getting to know and love Him. God is with us all the time and you can pray to Him at anytime and anywhere.

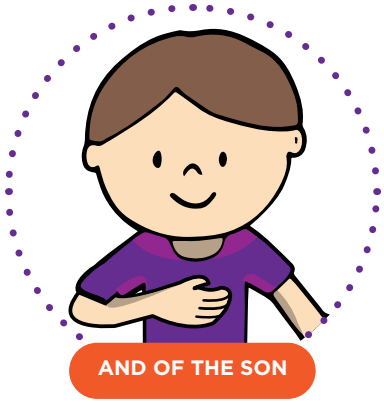
THERE ARE MANY WAYS OF PRAYING, HERE ARE JUST A FEW SIMPLE PRAYERS YOU CAN PRAY AS A FAMILY.

Making the Sign of the Cross *(using your right hand)*

1. Touch your forehead



2. Touch your chest



3. Touch your left shoulder

4. Touch your right shoulder

3. Bring your hands together

PRAYER

Grace Before Meals

Bless us, O Lord! and these your gifts,
which we are about to receive from your bounty,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thank you for the World so Sweet

Thank you for the world so sweet.
Thank you for the food we eat.
Thank you for the birds that sing.
Thank you, God, for everything.
Amen.

Morning Prayer

Now, before I run to play,
Let me not forget to pray.
God in Heaven hear my prayer.
Keep me in your loving care.
Be my guide in all I do.
Bless all those who love me too.
Amen.

Bedtime Prayer

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
Guide me safely through the night,
And wake me with the morning light.
Amen.

Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name,
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day, our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into
Temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with thee;
Blessed are thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

USEFUL RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

- **SYDNEY CATHOLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES**
  www.scecs.nsw.edu.au

- **CATHOLIC SYDNEY ARCHDIOCESE**
  www.sydneycatholic.org

- **SYDNEY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**
  www.sydcatholicschools.nsw.edu.au

- **HOW TO PRAY WITH YOUR CHILDREN**
  www.hallow.com/blog/how-to-pray-with-kids

  How to Pray with Kids is a guide to Catholic children's prayers on the Hallow App.
  You will find many useful Catholic resources on the Hallow App.

- **SCRIPTURE LULLABIES**
  www.scripture-lullabies.com/free
  Scripture Lullabies is peaceful music to help calm anxious hearts; sleep soundly; and bring peace to those suffering from illness, trauma, grief, and difficult circumstances. A beautiful way to experience God's Word in a uniquely gentle way.

- **KIDS MATTER**
  www.beyou.edu.au
  KidsMatter is an Australian mental health and wellbeing initiative set in early childhood education and care services.

- **RAISING CHILDREN NETWORK**
  www.raisingchildren.net.au
  Raising Children website useful resource to support you in raising your children.

- **POSITIVE PARENTING PROGRAM**
  www.triplep.net/glo-en/home
  Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) gives parents simple and practical strategies to help them build strong, healthy relationships, and confidently manage their children's behaviour to prevent problems from developing.

- **STARTING BLOCKS**
  www.startingblocks.gov.au
  Starting Blocks provides parents with information about early childhood education and care

- **LEARNING POTENTIAL**
  www.learningpotential.gov.au
  Learning Potential has lots of useful tips and ideas to help busy parents support their child's learning.

- **SAFER INTERNET**
  www.esafety.gov.au/parents
  eSafety Australia is a useful website for safer and more positive family online experiences.

SCECS Prayer

Loving God,

We thank you for the gift of children and for the opportunity to nurture them in faith, honesty, and love through Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services. May they feel your love and presence each day as they learn and play.

Grant inspiration to our educators as they teach and guide the children, fostering curiosity, innovation, creativity, trust and kindness. May they be inspired by the Holy Spirit to lead by example and to instill values of compassion and respect.

Bless the families of our children, that they may be strengthened in their roles as primary educators in faith. May they find support and encouragement within this community.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Sydney Catholic early childhood services

For further information contact us below

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EMAIL scecs@syd.catholic.edu.au
Head Office 38 Renwick Street Leichhardt, NSW 2040

scecs.nsw.edu.au