

Section**1****Foreword**

Welcome to the Police Citizens' Youth Club (PCYC) School Age Care program. We trust that you will have a long and compatible association with us. Our aim is to provide a caring and secure environment where each child can develop his or her physical, intellectual, social and emotional skills to become a competent and a confident individual.

The program has been developed to cater for the needs of the community by providing School Age Care program facilities. We are committed to providing the highest quality care and to implementing sound educational principles to fully meet the needs of our children and their families. This handbook has been designed to provide you with an outline of the conditions of attendance and the policies associated with the Police Citizens' Youth Club School Age Care programs.

We would encourage you to familiarise yourself with this document and to ask for clarification about any points which you do not understand.

This service is licensed by the Office of Early Education and Care under the Child Care Act 2002 and Child Care Regulations 2003. This service must meet the requirements about activities, experiences and programs, numbers of staff members and children and staff member qualifications according to the appropriate legislation.

If considering School Age Care, parents/caregivers need to contact the Coordinator or a member of the office staff to discuss the child's potential attendance and any special care requirements. Parents/caregivers need to agree to the conditions set down by the Queensland Police Citizens' Youth Welfare Association (QPCYWA), abide by these conditions and sign the parents/caregivers agreement before care can commence for any child.

Parents and guardians are invited to discuss the activities and experiences provided as part the service's learning programs and the goals achieved through our programs. Please ask the Coordinator or Supervisors for more detailed information about your child's development and our underpinning philosophy of learning that informs our programs.

Should you require to contact the Office for Early Education and Care for info or to discuss a concern please contact the Child Care Information Service on 1800 637 711 for your local Child Care Regulations Regional Office.

We trust that the service we provide in caring for your child will give you peace of mind. We look forward to meeting with you to discuss any queries you may have.

Section**2****QPCYWA Vision, Mission & Objectives****Vision**

Our vision is Enhancing Queensland Communities Through Youth Development.

Mission

Police-Citizens Youth Clubs – in partnership with the Government, community, business and families – achieving Excellence in Youth Development by encouraging participation in recreational, sporting, cultural and welfare programs.

Objectives

- To afford the young people of Queensland the opportunity to participate in clean and healthy recreation;
- To improve the standard of physical fitness;
- To encourage and foster music, literature, art and culture;
- To encourage an interest in Australia flora and fauna;
- To encourage the principles of good citizenship;
- To awaken citizens to their responsibilities towards adolescents;
- To assist boys and girls to select their future vocations;
- To do anything conducive of the welfare of youth and citizens generally; and
- To promote the physical, mental and social welfare of youth, who, by physical or other handicaps or because of the indigent circumstances of their parents/caregivers, may be regarded as disadvantaged

Section 3

Our Philosophy

We believe that the primary focus of outside of school hour's care must be the individual child in their middle childhood years.

Every child is an individual with individual needs, abilities, interests, cultures and backgrounds. The primary objective of an OSHC centre is to meet the needs of the individual in middle childhood and provide experiences that will foster their overall development – the physical, emotional, intellectual, aesthetic and social self.

We believe that children learn by doing and that children learn through play...

It is important to provide children with a wide range of developmental activities that promote active involvement with materials and peers and that allow children freedom of choice and decision making in their own play.

We believe that children need to feel safe and secure in the childcare environment...

Children need a caring, predictable, positive, comfortable and cooperative environment where they can explore, problem solve, create and work at their own pace, and which will promote their curiosity, their imagination and confidence so that they will feel a sense of satisfaction and self esteem.

We believe that parents/caregivers are the most important people in a child's life...

Communication between the childcare worker and the parents/caregivers is essential in maintaining continuity for the child between home and the centre. Parents/caregivers have their own ideas, interests, knowledge and skills. You will be made to feel welcome, comfortable, and free to ask questions and encouraged to participate in the programme.

We believe that the effective childcare worker focuses on thinking and processes, and has an understanding of the children's learning...

This understanding is achieved through analysing how something is learned, knowledge of age appropriate expectations and on reflection.

The **key** to offering support to children is our belief in, and our commitment to, the value of the individual child.

Section**4****Our Objectives**

- Provide a warm, caring, non-threatening and nurturing environment in which all children feel that they are special and that they have a place in the program. Furthermore, we aim to create a responsive and inclusive atmosphere for all children, based on the foundations of respect, trust and equality. Meet the social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs of the children in the group as far as possible within the boundaries of the School Age Care program.
- Ensure that the children have an opportunity to relax, to be stimulated, to be challenged, to make new friends, develop new skills and practice known skills and to learn to interact with other children and adults.
- Offer a program that will encourage co-operation rather than competition, where effort and participation are valued, and where play is productive rather than just 'busy' in order that children may mature to their own capacity.
- Support the children in their efforts to enhance their self-esteem, feelings of 'mastery' and independence by providing opportunities for them to participate in group decision making processes.
- Provide a comfortable, safe and healthy environment for the children, with particular emphasis on hygiene and careful food preparation. In addition, to supply and offer a wide variety of nutritious foods to all children as appropriate.
- Actively seek to be a part of the wider community in which the children live, and to reflect and respond to the interests and activities of that wider community. To provide opportunities for parents/caregivers and the community to be involved with the School Age Care program.
- Respect and value each child as unique, positively appreciate all cultural, social and linguistic differences of those involved in School Age Care and to cater for each child's needs in this regard.
- Create an environment where children's ideas and opinions are valued. Additionally, to offer children genuine choices in terms of available activities and to assist the children to achieve and enjoy success in the area of their choice.
- Provide a fun program – one that will encourage children to initiate and participate in play and recreational experiences, support physical development, encourage creative and aesthetic development and support the development of life skills.
- Assist in the development of supportive networks between the parents/caregivers of children in the program and the staff. This will include taking into account any other support that a child may be receiving from professionals such as child welfare workers or psychologists. In consultation with the parents/caregivers incorporate any goals set by these professionals into the School Age Care program for the benefit of that child.
- Actively promote equal opportunity by encouraging all children to understand that they are equally competent and able to participate in the full range of life options.
- Comply with all relevant childcare laws, State Legislation and Commonwealth Laws. Undertake the State Government Registration and Licensing process, where appropriate. Undertake the 'OSHCQA', quality assurance registration process and upon attainment continually work towards a quality improvement plan.

Section 5

Who Can Use Our Service

Your child(ren) must be school age and attending school full-time to use our service (this includes children attending prep classes). Vacation Care Children must have commenced school to attend. However, when allocating places, priority will be given to prep and primary school aged children. Our policy of inclusion endeavours to understand and provide for the individual needs of your child. Depending on your child(ren)'s support needs, we may need your co-operation and assistance in being able to meet your child's individual needs.

Some children may have high support needs or additional needs which have to be met, if they are to safely participate and enjoy the program. High support needs may include children with chronic conditions, disabilities, and emotional or behavioural problems or with different cultural or religious backgrounds. Special needs requirements are to be negotiated with the Coordinator.

The Coordinator and the Supervisors will do their best to incorporate all children, but cannot jeopardise the safety of the child or other children. If an acceptable level of safety cannot be provided for a child or children, the parent/caregiver will be required to assist in the program, or to make other suitable arrangements for that child.

To safely care for all children, and for them to enjoy the program, all children need to have some communication and self care skills. Parents/caregivers of children with limited self care skills may need to discuss in-care arrangements with the Coordinator. Parents/caregivers may need to provide or arrange extra support for their child during some or all of the activities.

Non Discriminatory Access

At the PCYC we invite families of all cultural and religious backgrounds, children of non-English speaking families and children with special needs to enrol in our centre and experience an anti-biased play and learning environment. Programs are presented so that there is an integration of various cultures and so all children may benefit through individualised play and learning suited to their needs, interests, ethnicity and ability.

Children with Special Needs

The service believes that children with special needs be encouraged to integrate to become part of the service environment. This helps the children to learn appropriate skills from peers and enhance other areas of their development. It is our belief that all children will benefit from this interaction as they learn to accept uniqueness's, develop empathy and learn co-operation and patience. Before enrolling your child(ren) in our program, it will be necessary to discuss the special needs your child(ren) may have, and how best we can meet them. Please refer to our policies and procedures manual for further information on policy 2.11 – Including Children with Special/Additional Needs Policy

Planning for children with special needs requires careful thought and often the assistance of specialists. It is important to know how the specific needs may or may not affect the child(ren)'s play and learning and activities. This information will help us to meet the needs of the children and seek assistance from specialist and support workers. Please help us to provide quality care for your child(ren) by bringing to our attention any special needs your child(ren) may have.

Priority of Access

As outlined above the PCYC is a non-discriminatory centre. The Federal Government has established guidelines for those who can receive priority access into a Centre. All Centres receiving Child Care Benefit must abide by these guidelines.

Upon enrolment, if your choice of day cannot be accommodated an alternative day is offered if available and your child's name is placed on a waiting list until the required day/s become available.

- Priority 1 – a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- Priority 2 – a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy the work/training/study test under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act.
- Priority 3 – any other child.

Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children in families which include a disabled person
- children in families on lower incomes
- children in families with a non-English speaking background
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents.

There are some circumstances in which a child who is already in a child care service may be required to leave the service. Any child care service that has no vacant places and is providing care for a child who is a third priority may require that child to leave the service in order for the service to provide a place for a higher priority child.

Please note, if parents/caregivers' circumstances change so as to reduce the need for care, then their child's place may be open for review.

Section 6

Enrolment and Childcare Benefit

Enrolment Forms

Upon entry to the PCYC, the Coordinator or a staff member will escort you through the Centre to discuss our philosophy and the various policies of the service. You will be offered a copy of this booklet along with an enrolment form.

All parents/caregivers are required to complete enrolment forms prior to commencement. Some information on these forms may require updating from time to time. It is *your* responsibility to make certain that this happens to avoid unnecessary anxiety for yourself and for staff in the event of an emergency. Enrolment forms **must** be completed and handed to a staff member prior to your child starting care. All children must become members of the PCYC for insurance purposes. In accordance with state regulations s97 – care cannot be provided to a child unless a parent or guardian of the child has given the licensee a medical authorisation for the child.

Fee Assistance

You will need to contact the Family Assistance Office to register for Child Care Benefit (CCB). **This is the Parents/caregivers' responsibility.** The centre will then be notified by the FAO office of the family percentage applicable once a formal enrolment has been processed for the child. This amount will then be deducted from the fees. We require the child and guardians DOB and CRN to make a formal enrolment.

Fee Assistance reduces the amount you must pay for your childcare. The amount of fee relief you receive depends on your income and the number of dependent children you have. You must apply for assessment for Child Care Benefit through the Family Assistance Office. Forms are available from the centre or you can ring 136150. This assessment must be renewed annually.

All Parents/caregivers are eligible for 24 hours of Childcare Benefit a week. If you require up to the 50-hour limit, you will need to be working/studying looking for work and inform the FAO. If your child is at the centre between 50 –60 hours a week, you may be eligible for extra assistance for the extra hours actually attended. The percentage of fee relief that will apply to the scheduled fee will be passed onto the childcare centre via the CCMS process and your fee will be worked out accordingly.

Calculating Child Care Benefit - The Government has a basic hourly rebateable fee that is usually adjusted in July of each year. The Fees are worked out on a formula. School Children receive 85% of the benefit. For Parents/caregivers with one child in care and earning more than \$95,000 can still receive the minimum rebate. Please see the Coordinator for more details on all of the above.

50% Child Care Tax Rebate

In addition to Child Care Benefit families are able to claim a 50% Childcare Tax Rebate. Delivered through the Tax Office, the rebate covers 50% of families' out-of-pocket expenses for approved child care, up to \$7,500 per child per year. The rebate is indexed each year and is not income tested.

Out-of-pocket expenses are total child care fees charged for approved child care less actual CCB entitlement.

To be eligible for the rebate, families must:

- Have used approved child care and
- Have received CCB and
- Meet the work/training/study test requirements.

Payment process for CCTR

- Service provides child care for family
- Service provides details of weekly usage information on Attendance record reports to Centrelink weekly
- At reconciliation, the FAO works out the families CCTR entitlements based on out of pocket expenses

For more information about the 50% Child Care Tax Rebate visit

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/OfficeOfEarlyChildhood/cctr/Pages/ChildCareTaxRebate.aspx>
or phone 13 61 50.

Allowable Absences

Allowable absences occur when the centre can charge a fee for care and claim Childcare Benefit when the child is not present. All families will be eligible for 42 days of allowable absences for each child per financial year (July to June). This includes casual absences and absences caused by holidays or illness.

All allowable absences will be charged at normal rates. When the 42 days have been used full centre fees will be charged, as the government will not pay their contribution after this point. If your child attends any other form of CCB funded care then the absences from the other centres will also be noted by the Government and totalled together when centres send in their quarterly returns.

If your child(ren) will not be attending a booked session of Before School Care or Vacation Care you must notify the centre of your child(ren)'s absence before 7.00am on the day of your child's attendance. If your child(ren) will not be attending a booked session of After School Care you must notify the centre before 10.00am. THERE WILL BE A CHARGE FOR THESE SESSIONS NOT UTILISED. If staff are required to phone a family to find the whereabouts of a child when collecting them from the school, there will be a \$2 charge per phone call

PCYC Fee Policy

This Service aims to provide a quality service to families at an affordable price. The Branch Manager will set fees required for the provision of quality childcare in keeping with the Service's Philosophy Statement and other goals, and these Policies and Procedures.

All parents/guardians using School Age Care services of the Association will pay all fees one week prior to first day of attendance and then keep fees at **least one week in advance at all times**. These fees may be paid by, depending on the facilities available within a Branch, cash, cheque, Eftpos, credit card or by EZI Debit. If fees are not paid up front, a service will not be provided. If fees are not paid then they must be paid on dropping your children off at the service. This includes Membership and School Age Care Fees. (Unless prior arrangements have been made with the Branch Manager).

Procedures

- All bookings are permanent which means there is a fee attached whether a child utilises the program or not. However, if the Coordinator is given sufficient notice charges will be made for children who do not require care for between one and three weeks. Any leave in excess of three weeks will require payment of fees to maintain the permanent CCB booking (See policy 10.3).
- Fees are charged at sessional rates. No hourly fee applies. Fees are subject to change without notice
- Fees will be paid, for all days booked, on the first day of attendance each week to the Coordinator.
- Vacation Fees increase by \$5 a day for bookings made after the enrolment end date which will be the Wednesday prior to the start of the vacation care period – or earlier as notified as designated by the service
- 48 hours notice is required for before and after school care to cancel a session and not be charged.
- Statements will be issued on a weekly basis.
- A receipt will be issued for each payment detailing all the requirements according to the Commonwealth Department Family & Community Services Child Care Benefit Handbook. (A copy of which is held at the Service for access by parents and other genuinely interested persons).
- Payment electronically through 'Ezi Debit' is preferred.
- All monies will be banked on behalf of the Service as soon as possible after receipt.

Ezi Debit

Ezi Debit is a fully automated, flexible payment facility utilising a direct debit system. This facility allows parents to have the convenience of regular payments taken automatically from your bank, cheque or credit card account to pay your childcare fees. *Ezi Debit* transactions are safe, secure and accurate. The system also eliminates the risks associated with handling cash in our premises. The process of an *Ezi Debit* payment is quite simple.

If parents choose to use the facility they first have to complete an *Ezi Debit* direct debit request form. On this form they specify how much they would like debited from your account and when. They can choose to make payments weekly, fortnightly, monthly or four weekly.

The debit commences on the start date and at the frequency specified by the parent. Debits can be altered within 24 hours notice. *Ezi Debit* automated transactions are very cost effective. A direct debit from a banking or cheque account cost only \$0.88 per transaction plus a once off set up fee of \$2.20. An automated payment from a Visa MasterCard or Bankcard is only 2.2% plus the set up fee.

PCYC Membership

Children who are enrolled to use our service must become members of the Queensland Police Citizens' Youth Welfare Association. This will afford them protection under the Association's personal Membership Insurance.

Membership fees are set by the Board of Directors each year. Any person applying for membership of the Association is to complete the authorised membership application in full. A new membership form should be completed and signed initially, and then endorsed each year over the next three years by every member renewing membership.

Cancellations and Refunds

This Service aims to provide a fair service to families at an affordable price in keeping with the Service's Philosophy Statement and other goals.

Before School Care and After School Care

- If a child is not attending a booked session of Before School Care parents must notify the centre of the child's absence before 7.00am on the day of the child's non attendance. (fee payable)
- If a child is not attending a booked session of After School Care parents must notify the centre before 1pm of the child's non attendance. (fee payable)
- There shall be no refunds given for cancellation unless the Coordinator/Branch Manager decides otherwise.

Vacation Care

- Bookings can be cancelled or changed up until a date specified by the Coordinator - usually one week before the start of the vacation care period. After this date all bookings (and any associated additional excursion fees) need to be paid for irrespective if the place(s) is/are used or not.

Section

7

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Signing Children In and Out

Located at a prominent position in all our centres are the sign in /out folders. If dropping your child(ren) off for Before School Care or Vacation Care please print name & sign your child(ren) in, noting the time. When collecting your child(ren) from After School Care or Vacation Care please print name & sign your child(ren) out. Again note the time. This is a requirement to gain CCB and may be checked by the FAO at any time. Accurate recording of which children have been signed in and out is also important in the event of an emergency evacuation of the premises. It is a State regulation that you print your name and sign the in/out sheets.

A staff member must be notified that you are taking your child(ren) home. People nominated on the enrolment form are the only people authorised to pick up your child from the centre. Please advise staff members of any changes to your daily contact number (other than those on the enrolment form). All

children need to be brought to (in the case of Before School Care and Vacation Care) and collected from (in the case of After School Care and Vacation Care) the centres by a responsible adult.

On arrival the child should be encouraged to place his/her bag in the locker/port rack. The child should be taken to a staff member on duty, at this time it is always good to allow a little time to communicate with the staff member and to allow the child to relax. In the case of an upset child (separation anxiety) we have found it easier to settle the child at the time the parents/caregivers says goodbye and tells the child when they will return. This reassures that the parents/caregivers will be back and in the interim their childcare workers are there to look after them.

Collection of Children and the Late Fee

If a child is not collected by the time a centre closes the staff on duty will attempt to contact the parents/caregivers, emergency contacts or people authorised to collect the child. If a child has not been collected within 30 minutes of closing time the Branch Manager will be notified of the situation and staff will continue to contact the parents/caregivers and other authorised people. If a child has not been collected 30 minutes after a centre has closed and contact with the parents/caregivers has not been made, the child will be transported, if not already in attendance there, to the PCYC. If the club is closed the child will be taken to the local police station.

If you know that you will be late collecting your child, please phone and inform the centre, so that the staff can re-assure your child. If someone other than the parents/caregivers is to collect the child, it is your responsibility to advise the staff before hand. Children WILL NOT be released from the centre with an adult who has not previously been nominated by you. In the event of a nominated person picking up a child from the centre, other than the parents/caregivers, the staff will need to see photo identification. Please notify the centre to ensure the appropriate paperwork has been completed. In the event that the appropriate paperwork has not been completed; the staff WILL NOT release the child until telephone contact is made with the parents/caregivers for verbal direction and photo identification is sighted.

If a child is collected after the centre's closing time the family will attract a late fee of \$10.00. After the first ten minutes an additional charge of \$1.00 per minute will be incurred per child/ family.

Section 8

Quality Assurance

Introduction

The primary aim of all people involved in School Age Care is to provide quality services for children and their families. We believe the provision of quality care for children requires a continuous cycle of quality improvement. As professionals, to achieve this aim, we are continually reflecting on our feelings about interaction with children, expanding our knowledge base, improving practices and developing and maintaining positive relationships with the families who use our service and the local community. With the introduction of the Government's School Age Care Quality Assurance (OSHCQA) process, aiming for continuous quality improvement has been made that much easier. OSHCQA aims to provide school age children in School Age Care throughout Australia with high quality care that promotes learning and development while recognising the importance of social interactions and recreation. This process will define quality in School Age Care and will provide a way to measure the quality of care and help identify areas for on-going quality improvement.

The OSHCQA process ensures that School Age Care services:

- Have a clear philosophy and goals, agreed between staff, management and families.
- Appreciates respects and fosters the individuality and the interdependence of all children from diverse backgrounds and children who have additional needs.

- Considers the appropriateness of all experiences and activities affecting the children in relation to their interests and development.
- Recognises the importance of social interaction and recreational experiences for school age children; and
- Encourages families to become involved in the service and fosters the relationship between staff and families so they can support one another.

The Quality Areas

OSHCQA defines quality in School Age Care and provides a way to measure the quality of care for children. It does this through eight Quality Areas:

- Respect for Children
- Staff Interactions and Relationships with Children
- Partnerships with Families and the Community Links
- Programming and Evaluation
- Play and Development
- Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing
- Protective Care and Safety
- Managing to Support Quality

Step 1: Registration

The service registers with the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) and pays an initial registration fee to participate in the registration process.

Step 2: Self Study and Continuing Improvement

The provision of quality care for children requires continuous attention to self study and quality improvement. In a regular cycle, the service makes a self-assessment of the quality of its practices. This involves consulting with staff, families, and where appropriate, with the children at the service. During self study, the service evaluates the quality of its practices. The results of the self study process inform the service's Continuing Improvement Plan. Both the services Self Study Report and Continuing Improvement Plan are submitted to the NCAC.

Step 3: Validation

An School Age Care Validator, selected and trained by the NCAC, visits the service to observe practice and view evidence of quality such as Continuing Improvement Plans and other documentation which will help create a 'picture' of the service. Before the visit a Validation Survey is circulated to all staff, families and children. The Validator does not make the Accreditation Decision; instead they write a report based on observations of the service and its supporting documentation.

Step 4: Moderation

The process of Moderation helps to ensure that all services participating in OSHCQA are treated consistently on a national basis. Moderators assess the quality of the service's practices, guided by information in the service's Self-Study Report, the service's Validation Surveys and the Validation Report. Moderators will look at each service as a whole, identifying patterns of quality care within the

service enabling the Moderators to compile a composite Quality Profile of the service and develop a Continuing Improvement Guide for each service.

Step 5: Accreditation Decision

The Accreditation Decision is made by NCAC and is the final step in the process. To be accredited, a service must achieve a rating of Satisfactory in all eight Quality Areas. If awarded Accreditation status, services are presented with a Certificate of Accreditation. An Accredited service is required to continue its self study and continuing improvement cycle (step 2) until its next self-study report is due for submission in two and a half years time. Services that do not meet the standards required for Accreditation are required to submit another Self-Study Report six months from the date of the Accreditation Decision.

Section 9

Respect for Children

Introduction – Quality Area 1

- Staff foster self esteem and confidence in children.
- Staffs respect the diversity of children's backgrounds and abilities and accommodate the individual needs of each child.
- Children are treated equitably.

The PCYC advocate that there should be strategies in place to foster respect and support all children's participation in a service's program. It is this Service's belief that when staff show an interest in children's lives and respect children, they feel valued, capable and more confident in their ability to express themselves, work through difficulties, learn new things and take calculated risks. We also believe that respecting children promotes children's self esteem and enhances the children's enjoyment of the program.

Section 10

Staff Interactions & Relationships with Children

Introduction – Quality Area 2

- Staff communicate effectively with each other and display professionalism, teamwork and mutual respect.
- Staff create a responsive and inclusive atmosphere and relate to children in a warm and friendly manner.
- Staff guide children's behaviour in a positive way.

Staff share a commitment to fostering professional, harmonious relationships amongst themselves and with children to ensure the environment meets the play and care needs of school aged children. Further, we believe a successful team communicates openly, shares knowledge and understanding, embraces diversity and demonstrates mutual respect and professional ethics. We feel it is vitally important that staff create a responsive and inclusive atmosphere within the service. This is achieved through staff taking time to foster friendships with children: seeking to understand them, develop trust and interact in positive ways. It is our belief that that staff also need to guide children's behaviour in positive ways, helping them to express a range of emotional responses.

Section 11

Partnership with Families

Introduction – Quality Area 3

- The Service is responsive to the interest of families and encourages participation in the operation of the service.
- The Service actively seeks to build links with the community.
- The Service is responsive to diverse community needs.

The PCYC supports the notion that the relationship between the child's family and staff is crucial to the child's wellbeing, development and progress. It is believed that children benefit most when this is a trusting and mutually supportive partnership. Further, our responsive programs reflect community values, attitudes and utilises community resources.

Our Open Door Policy

At PCYC, we have an 'Open Door Policy' and parents/caregivers are welcome at any time to visit and participate at their convenience. We would encourage parents/caregivers to share their time, varied talents, cooking experiences, cultural background and to assist with excursions. By establishing and maintaining partnerships with parents/caregivers, childcare workers can learn more about the particular needs, abilities and interests of each child as well as ensuring that play and learning programs are inclusive for all cultures. Throughout the year we will hold a number of information and social events. These events will provide parents/caregivers with an opportunity to discuss their child(ren)'s needs with staff members in an informal setting.

It is always important that you as parents/caregivers relay to the staff when your child is off colour or behaving differently or when for some reason things are not normal at home. This information is important as it helps us to understand any changes in behaviour.

We encourage you to communicate frequently with your child(ren)'s childcare workers, as we believe that working together is in the best interest of your child.

Parent/Caregivers' Code of Conduct

- Parents/caregivers are responsible for their children's behaviour whilst the parents/caregivers is on the premises.
- If parents/caregivers have any concerns regarding their children they are to report this to the Coordinator.
- At no time is a parent/caregiver to confront another parent/caregiver, child or staff attending the service. All enquires or problems should be reported to the Coordinator.
- Parents/caregivers are expected to behave in an appropriate manner whilst on the premises.
- If inappropriate behaviour is witnessed the parents/caregivers can be ejected from the PCYC and will be informed in writing of their suspension from the centre.
- This suspension may stay in place for any amount of time deemed necessary or desirable for the purpose of guaranteeing the welfare or minimising danger to any child or children attending the service.

Procedures for Dealing with Concerns

If you have any concerns regarding the care and education of your child(ren) whilst attending the centre, please approach your child(ren)'s Coordinator to discuss the matter. At the PCYC we encourage parents/caregivers to discuss issues or concerns as soon as they arise. In this way any issues can be

resolved quickly and easily. If you feel that your concerns have not been met or that you feel uncomfortable discussing it with your child(ren)'s Coordinator, please do not hesitate to discuss this with the Branch Manager.

Similarly, we encourage the children to let us know if they have a concern so that it can be dealt with quickly –children can use the suggestion box or concerns forms if they do not feel comfortable talking to a staff member.

The Office for Early Childhood Education and Care is the Licensing Body controlling childcare centres in Queensland and they have a statutory responsibility to ensure that all regulations are adhered to. If you have any concerns about the quality of care and education your child(ren) is receiving, please contact Department of Communities Child Care Information Service on 1800 637 711 for the contact number of your local Community Support Officer.

Confidentiality

All records and information provided to the PCYC relating to childcare programs are kept strictly confidential, in accordance with the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988.

Privacy Statement: The Queensland Police Citizens' Youth Welfare Association values our members and the individuals who interact with and support us and will continue to protect the personal information which you intrust to us.

Section 12

Programming & Evaluation

Introduction – Quality Area 4

- Our programs reflect a clear statement of service philosophy and a related set of service goals.
- Our programs cater for the needs, interests and abilities of all children.
- Staff work collaboratively with children to plan and implement experiences.
- Our programs are regularly evaluated.

Our Philosophy and Goals

The service's philosophy and goals provide an important framework within which the programming decisions are made. We believe effective programming should also take into account feedback and observations from all the service's stakeholders – most importantly, from the children themselves. Further, we believe an effective program must take into account contextual issues. Such issues include venue location and design, child and family characteristics, staff backgrounds, available resources and group dynamics.

Flexibility

High quality childcare services have programs that are flexible. Adaptability ensures programs meet the individual and group needs of the children in care. Our programs are stimulating and involving and there are a variety of opportunities for children to pursue their current interests and develop new ones. As far as possible, our programs allow children to make their own choices based on individual interests, needs, ages, strengths and energy levels. Our programs also promote the importance of play.

Evaluation

To achieve positive outcomes for the children in care staff share in the planning and evaluation of programs. However, while staff have their own views on program outcomes, their views are considered

alongside feedback from children and families. Our program evaluation is motivated by a genuine desire to improve the program.

Homework Time

Children will be given the opportunity during the afternoon session to do their homework.

Extra Activities, Excursions and Services

Many of the services have received funding to provide the Active After School Care program one or two afternoons a week at no cost to families. The program provides funding to provide coaches and equipment for a range of activities including – hockey, AFL, Tennis, Dancing, Tai Kwon Do etc

We enjoy having visitors to each of our centres, and there are many excellent shows that travel to School Age Care centres to perform. In these cases, parents/caregivers are required to pay the charge when children are booked in to attend the show.

During Vacation Care we may take the children on an excursion. Parents/caregivers will be given good notice regarding excursion dates, times, etc. A permission form will be distributed to parents/caregivers. There will be a description of the excursion and what each child is required to bring with them. Parents/caregivers interested in helping out on excursions should contact the Coordinator. While on excursions our staff/child ratios are: 1 adult for 8 school aged children. When swimming the ration is 1 adult for 5 school age children.

Valuables

Children are asked not to bring valuables to the service. Eg phones, iPods, mp3, computer games, etc The service will not be responsible for the lost, stolen or damaged items. If any of these items are brought to the centre they are to be given to the coordinator on arrival and collected when going home.

Clothing

Parents/caregivers are asked to dress their child in suitable clothes for Vacation Care to enable uninhibited play. Children enjoy playing with paint, clay, sand, water and mud, which can be quite messy at times. Staff will take care to see that the children wear aprons where appropriate. However, they cannot guarantee clothes will remain unsoiled at all times!

All children are required to have a hat, which will be clearly marked with your child's name; this hat must be worn during outdoor activities. We also require children to wear closed in shoes and a sun smart top. Singlet tops are **not** acceptable.

It is important that all articles of clothing be clearly marked with your child's name. After an appropriate amount of time unclaimed lost property will be discarded.

Section 13

Play and Development

Introduction – Quality Area 5

- Programs encourage children to initiate and participate in play and recreational experiences.
- Programs support physical development.
- Programs support the development of life skills.
- Programs support creative and aesthetic development.

The Importance of Play

We support the notion that an effective School Age Care Service recognises the unique requirements of each child and makes an effort to meet these needs. One of the primary objectives of our program planning is to support the natural play that children initiate and engage in spontaneously. The child's right to play and the value of child-initiated play are acknowledged in the way the environment and programs are structured and in the expectations adults have about how children will spend their time. Creative, self-directed play should not be viewed as wasted time but rather as the medium for some of the richest experiences and most powerful learning of childhood. In this context we provide children with a safe, stimulating environment and the time to explore, create, experiment and express themselves as they choose.

Behaviour Management

Behaviour management is encouraged. It sets the limits for children to learn the difference from right and wrong. We believe that children's learning is enhanced when they have a basic set of 'rules for living' and when the 'significant others' in their lives provide consistent guidance. Through consistency comes a warm, mutual respect between staff and children, a relationship based on trust and built on security.

Our behaviour management policy encourages children to co-operate, to use their social skills appropriately, to enhance their self-esteem. All children have different needs so the ability to interact and express one self individually should be assisted, guided and understood by the caregiver. When managing difficult behaviour all expectations are based upon age appropriate behaviour patterns. We set reasonable limits and explain the reasons for these limits.

Our beliefs and aims are:

- Positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviour.
- Self-discipline – which allows children 'thinking time' to realise actions.
- Self expression – allows children to explain what has happened.
- Safety – explaining to the children the safety aspects.
- Understanding, Gentleness, Caring, Individuality.
- Firmness – what pleases some children and angers or hurts others in social interaction.
- Communicating with parents/caregivers, forming a partnership in relationship to behaviour management.
- Staff will provide a well planned developmental and age appropriate program to satisfy children's needs to create and explore.

Working with parents/caregivers... We believe that it is very important that behaviour management techniques be consistent with those used at home. This will ensure that the child does not become confused and always knows where they stand. Staff will work closely with parents/caregivers when dealing with difficult behaviour in the hope the problem is only short term. Staff will keep parents/caregivers informed as to their child's progress and it is hoped that parents/caregivers will provide similar feedback to staff.

Common Problem Behaviours...

- **Swearing...** Children use swear words because it gets a big response and makes them feel powerful. The secret is to remove this power by ignoring it and to make the child feel powerful in more acceptable ways. Some parents/caregivers are concerned that their children will learn unacceptable language from other children at our centres. The reality is that most children hear these words outside the centres, from older children, adults in the community and the media.
- **Aggression...** A certain amount of aggression is normal in young children. Many children cannot control their strong feelings and act impulsively. They are not able to understand the consequences of their action. We try to empower children with skills in dealing with aggression.

- **Dealing with problem behaviour...** Staff deal with persistent behaviour in the following ways: redirecting behaviour in a positive way; children are encouraged to think about their behaviour and its effects on those around them; we promote the use of language in conflict resolution rather than the use of physical aggression; action is taken immediately rather than left for later attention as children forget their actions and reasons for them; staff concentrate on the action and not the child - just because the behaviour is bad does not mean the child is bad; and if a child's behaviour poses a threat to the other children then they will be removed from the situation for a short period of time. The child will be encouraged to use this time to think about their actions and calm down. An adult will accompany them.

The following behaviours will not be tolerated:

- Obscene language
- Bullying of other children
- Biting
- Continual disobedience of Staff instructions
- Damaging of program/PCYC equipment
- Aggressive behaviour towards staff or other children

For serious or continuous behavioural infringements a written three warning system will apply. These warnings involve a 'notice of warning' being issued and signed by the child, supervisor and parents/caregiver. Three of these warnings may result in the child being refused admittance until the Coordinator and staff are satisfied that there is not likely to be any further behavioural problems. It is in the interest of all that any difficulties that your child may have, be brought to our attention, so some allowance may be made of the exhibited behaviour.

If a child's behaviour causes or may reasonably cause physical danger or potential long-term emotional damage to other children, staff or the child himself or herself, the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately and asked to collect the child.

The child will be excluded from the program effective immediately and the lifting of the exclusion will be at the discretion of the Coordinator and Branch Manager."

Section 14

Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing

Introduction – Quality Area 6

- Balanced and healthy eating is promoted by the Service.
- Staff implement current and effective food handling and hygienic practices.
- The Service acts to control the spread of infectious diseases.
- The Service plans to meet the individual health requirements of children.

Our Responsibility

As Professional Child Carers it is our responsibility to have in place strict policies in regard to Health, wellbeing and hygiene. Such policies are designed to protect the health and safety of all children and adults attending the Service. Management and staff share a responsibility to keep-up-to-date with, and inform families of, current information on research and practices recommended by health and nutrition authorities. Further, we are sensitive and responsive to each child's daily nutritional needs, eating patterns, food preferences and dietary requirements. Cultural differences in relation to health, nutrition, food preparation and handling must also be considered and accommodated.

Immunisation

The PCYC supports the immunisation of all children but we believe that parents/caregivers should be able to make their own choices regarding this issue. It is important that parents/caregivers inform the centre after each immunisation has been given so that records are kept up to date. Non-immunised children will be excluded from the centre if there is an outbreak of any of the immunisable diseases. Children are now required to have up to date immunisation for parents/caregivers to claim the Child Care Benefit. (Federal Government Regulations).

Medicating Children at the Centre

- Details of any medication should be recorded on a Medication form.
- Staff will not administer medication, which is not labelled with the child's name and currently in date. This includes 'over the counter' preparations. These will need to be labelled by the pharmacist.
- All medication is stored in the room out of the reach of children.
- All medication should have a pharmacist label, which is to show the patient's name, the name of the medication, dosage, frequency of administration, the date of dispensing and the expiration date of the medication.
- Staff will not administer any medication via injection or suppository. (Unless discussed).

When Should a Child be excluded?

It is imperative that a child suffering any of the following conditions be excluded from the centre until they are no longer infectious, and well enough to participate in all programmed activities. In all cases a clearance letter signed by a doctor must be presented before a child can be readmitted to the centre.

FEVER:	A temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or higher is considered to be dangerous.
BRONCHITIS:	Exclude until appropriate medical treatment is given and the child is feeling well.
CHICKEN POX:	Exclude until the child has fully recovered and each blister has dried.
CONJUNCTIVITIS:	Exclude until discharge from the eyes has ceased.
CROUP:	Exclude until fully recovered.
DIARRHOEA:	Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased.
HAND, FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE:	Exclude until the blisters have dried.
HEAD LICE:	Exclude until treated. Parents/caregivers will be called to collect their child if lice are found on their child head at the Centre.
INFLUENZA:	Exclude until the child feels well.
MEASLES:	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surface should be covered.
IMPETIGO:	Exclude from at least four days from the appearance of the rash.
RUBELLA:	Exclude until fully recovered or four days after onset of rash.

Infection Control

Strict practices are in place to ensure that cross infection is kept to an absolute minimum.

- All toys and equipment are regularly disinfected.
- The centre is cleaned and sanitised each evening.
- Gloves are worn when dealing with dealing with cuts, abrasions or broken skin, cleaning blood and other body spills.
- Tissues, bandaids, clothes used for wiping up body fluids and first aid equipment disposed of in a special container and not in the rubbish bin.
- Lesions on staff and children must be covered.
- Good and frequent hand washing.

Asthma

The centre will follow the 4 step Asthma Aid Plan. This will be our guide for managing an asthma attack. Staff will be informed of the recommended procedures involved in treating an asthma attack and managing children with asthma in care.

Diabetes

The centre will follow the guidelines set down by Diabetes Australia and that prescribed by the child's doctor. Staff will watch for symptoms of Hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) and be aware of emergency action that may be required.

Nutrition

Good food is essential for good health throughout life. It is especially important that young children are brought up to appreciate a wide variety of nutritious foods. Nutrition is important to each child's physical, mental, emotional and social development. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to supply only healthy, nutritious foods for children's lunches, morning and afternoon teas. Chocolates, cakes, sweet biscuits, chips, lollies and soft drinks are discouraged. Staff are only too happy to give you some ideas and suggestions for your child's lunch box. Water is always available to children. Once the children have finished eating their lunch they are encouraged to take a drink of water. If, for medical reasons your child(ren) require a restricted diet, please inform your child(ren)'s coordinator as well as noting it on the enrolment form. Careful attention will be taken regarding your requirements.

Smoking

Smoking will not be tolerated on the premises or anywhere that the service utilises at any time. This is in accordance with Child Care Regulations.

Section 15

Protective Care and Safety

Introduction – Quality Area 7

- The Service has effective policies and procedures on protective care.
- The Service promotes a safe environment for both children and staff.
- The Service promotes occupational health and safety

The Importance of Safety

The safety of children is paramount at all times. With this in mind, management and staff are required to exercise a duty of care. This means they have a legal and moral obligation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children.

Occupational Health and Safety

The Service believes that in exercising a duty of care both management and staff must take reasonable care to protect children from foreseeable risk of harm or injury. Therefore, our Service ensures appropriate safety measures are applied to avoid dangerous situations. Procedures for identifying, handling and reporting accidents, building hazards and faulty equipment are in place.

Our Staff

We aim to bring children together in a friendly, attractive, secure environment. The staff structure consists of a Coordinator who is responsible for the organisation and oversight of all programs. Senior Supervisors and Supervisors are responsible for the day-to-day care of the children. Staff in each of our centres hold a range of relevant qualifications to work in an OSHC service. In addition, each staff member holds a current First Aid Certificate and a Working with Children Suitability Card (a 'Blue Card'). We endeavour to employ staff who are experienced in working with children. Staff are encouraged to attend in-service development courses and conferences, and are given time off work to do so.

Child Abuse

At the PCYC all staff are committed to the prevention of child abuse and to the protection of children. Staff are committed to ensuring that all children feel safe and secure in the childcare environment. The management team will ensure that individuals working in our centres have an awareness about and knowledge of child abuse. Staff will ensure that all suspected cases of child abuse are responded to in a professional manner, which will keep the child safe and protected. Staff will endeavour to protect children from abuse through encouraging and maintaining parents/caregiver involvement with in-service activities and responding to their concerns in a sensitive way.

Fire and Evacuation Drill

The centres Fire Drill procedure is displayed in every room. A regular evacuation drill is performed so that staff and children are well practiced at such procedures. Please follow staff directions if you are in the centre during a fire drill or emergency. The evacuation area is displayed at each centre.

Sun Safe Policy

As children spend a large portion of their time outside it is important that they are protected from the harmful effects of the sun. The following precautions must be taken:

- There should be shady places outside.
- Children are encouraged wear a full brim hat or legionnaires cap whenever outside.
- Staff model the wearing of hats.
- Protective clothing to be worn. No tank tops.
- Staff check that children apply sunscreen before outdoor play
- Adhere to a strict NO HAT, RESTRICTED PLAY policy.

Bus Safety

If applicable, children attending Before School Care Service will be transported to their respective schools by PCYC buses. Buses depart the Before School Care Service in time to ensure children arrive in time for school registration. Again, if applicable, children attending an After School Care service not on the child's school grounds will be collected from their school by a member of PCYC staff and will either walk to their After School Care centre or be transported to their After School Care centre by a PCYC bus. Procedures are put in place to ensure the correct children are collected on the correct day. Bus rolls are produced and the names of children getting on and off the bus are checked. If a child whose name appears on a bus roll fails to arrive at the bus stop ten minutes after the bell has rung the school will be contacted to ascertain if the child attended school that day. If it is discovered that the child did attend school the parents/caregivers of the child will be contacted to identify whether or not alternative arrangements have been made to collect the child.

The PCYC adheres to Queensland Transport's Code of Conduct for School Bus Travel. This Code of Conduct is a set of behavioural guidelines for students to follow when travelling on buses. It also includes procedures for bus operators/drivers to follow when managing children's behaviour associated

with bus travel. The Code helps ensure a comfortable, pleasant and safe ride for all. Example on how children can meet the Code:

- Wait well back from the bus until it stops.
- Treat other people and their possessions with respect.
- Follow the bus driver's and supervisor's directions without argument.
- Do not interfere with bus property, equipment, shelters and signs by marking or damaging them in any way.
- Sit properly on a seat.
- Store school bags under the seat.
- Speak quietly and create unnecessary noise.
- Wait until the bus stops before standing to get off.
- Alight from the bus in a quiet and orderly fashion.

Children must not:

- Bully other students.
- Place feet on seats.
- Fight, spit or use offensive language.
- Throw any article around or from the bus.
- Consume food or drink, or play music without permission of the driver.
- Allow any proportion of their body to protrude out of the bus.

If children do not abide by this Code, action may be taken. This may range from a caution, to refusal to travel, dependent on a number of factors including: the threat of safety of passengers on the bus and the nature of the incident; the age of the child; whether the breach was a first or one of a series of repeated incidents about which the child has been previously cautioned; or the extent to which the breach distracted the driver. A copy of Queensland Code of Conduct is available at our centres.

Section 16

Managing to Support Quality

Introduction – Quality Area 8

- Management ensures the Service operates within relevant legislation.
- Management and staff support each other and communicate effectively.
- Management has effective strategies for communicating with families.
- Management has effective recruitment, orientation and induction process for staff.
- Management provides and facilitates professional development opportunities for staff.
- Management ensures that grievances and complaints procedures are adhered to.

The Management's Role & Policies and Procedures

The management's role is to chart the direction of the service and to ensure its overall management and operation is smooth, effective and conducted within all relevant laws and regulations. Written policies and procedures are used to inform and guide the decisions and actions of all service personnel. The development and evaluation of such policies and procedures involved consultation with all stakeholders. This course of action ensures that management decisions, policies and procedures are more likely to meet the needs of the service, be understood by all concerned and more likely to be implemented. If

you would like a copy of any of the policies please ask the Coordinator who will be only to happy to oblige. Each year we review our policies and welcome feedback from parents/caregivers.

Conclusion

We are committed to providing the community with a high quality child care service. Should you have any questions, queries or problems regarding any aspect of the centre or your child's care then please contact the Coordinator or the Branch Manager of the Centre immediately.