

Information handbook

2022

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# Glossary of terms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| parent | primary care provider, secondary care provider, foster carer, extended family carer, government appointed carer or another recognised carer |
| FAO | Family Assistance Office |
| TCKC | Toowoomba Catholic Kindergartens and Care |
| OSHC | Outside Hours School Care |
| kindy | kindergarten |
| P&F | Parents and Friends Associations |
| NQF | National Quality Framework |
| DETE | Department of Education and Training |
| CPR | Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation |
| ACECQA | Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority |
| Vac care | vacation care |

**Useful numbers**

Early Childhood Education And Care - 1800 637 711

Family Assistance Office - 13 61 50

# 

# Welcome to Toowoomba Catholic Kindergarten and Care (TCKC)

Education and care services in the Diocese of Toowoomba are managed by TCKC. Kindergarten and OSHC are our approved childcare services.

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) receives Child Care Subsidy (CCS) funding through the Department of Education and Training under the legal entity and approved provider, The Corporation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba Early Leaning and Care operating as TCKC.

Our services aim to provide high quality care for children attending the program. It is through the dedication of our educators that a safe, caring and fun environment can be provided.

As an approved provider, each service must comply with current legislation and this is achieved with the support and guidance of the Senior Manager: Kindergartens and Care.

Please take the time to read this handbook as the following information has been prepared to assist you and your child to understand our services.

The policies and procedures under which the service operates are available upon request from the service.

A copy of the Education and Care Services National Act 2010 and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 will also be accessible from the service.

# Vision and mission

**Vision**

Each person in our Catholic education community is educated in inspiring and challenging ways and, in doing so, comes to know and love Christ.

*‘…act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God’ (Micah 6:8)*

**Mission**

With Christ at the centre of our mission, we commit ourselves to serving this Diocese with faithfulness, justice, love, humility and hope.

# Philosophy statement

Toowoomba Catholic Kindergarten and Care services are distinctive places of faith and learning where children play, interact, explore and experience the world in all its goodness and potential. Our work is grounded in a fundamental belief that each one of us is created in the image and likeness of God. This belief accords everyone an equal and inherent dignity, unlimited potential and an entitlement to a full and flourishing life.



**We believe**

Children learn best in a safe and vibrant environment where they experience a strong sense of belonging and wellbeing.

Parents are the first and foremost educators of their children who willingly share their educational responsibilities with trusted and qualified staff. It is a privilege for staff to share this partnership with parents.

Children are unique in their interests, learning styles, life experiences and cultural perspectives.



**We believe**

All children are competent and capable learners who will gradually take responsibility for their learning.

Play based learning enables each child to learn and make sense of the world through ‘hands on’ and interactive experiences.

Children learn about themselves as people and learners by creating, experimenting, predicting, imagining, achieving and investigating.

**We believe**

Children possess a natural curiosity and wonder about their world and their God.

Educational programs seek to develop confident, accomplished and intelligent children who demonstrate

* a positive self-esteem and world view
* a Christian moral foundation
* motivation to learn
* a positive disposition towards others
* high levels of achievement.

# Work Health and Safety

It is the Work Health and Safety policy of TCKC that every employee, volunteer, and visitor entering onto or into the premises, facility or service shall be provided with a safe and healthy environment.

To achieve this, every reasonable effort will be made to minimise the risk of serious injury or a workplace related illness by implementing safety rules and procedures. This is in accordance with

1. Work Health and Safety Act 2011 – Queensland legislation ([www.deir.qld.gov.au](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au))
2. WHS Regulations 2011 – QLD
3. Relevant Codes of Practice and Australian Standards.

Every endeavour will be made to have all activities in our service and in other locations, conducted in a way that the health and safety of all persons at each of these locations is not compromised.

In order to support this policy, the Kindergarten Director or OSHC Coordinator will ensure the service

* complies with all relevant WHS Legislation, Codes of Practice and Australian Standards
* promotes health and safety awareness for all people coming to the location
* develops safe work practices and safety guidelines at each location
* encourages awareness of the need for health and safety at each location.

Employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors (parents/carers and others) to the site will be expected to

* be accountable for his/her actions and to willingly cooperate in making the service a healthy and safe environment
* be accountable for health and safety of all people coming to any of these locations
* observe and practice personal safety while at the service
* report any unsafe situations or faulty equipment to a responsible person at the service
* report any serious injury, dangerous occurrence or near miss to a responsible person at the service as soon as practicable
* avoid actions that have the potential to place at risk their health and safety or that of any other person at the service or relevant service area.

**Storage facilities**

The service will provide adequate and safe storage facilities for equipment, tools, first aid kit, medication, and if required poisonous and dangerous substances. All program and staff records will have a confidential storage facility.

Facilities will include

* secure, locked and signed storage spaces for medication, first aid kits, and hazardous items including chemicals and sharp implements which are accessible to staff but not to children
* adequate storage space to ensure that equipment is kept in good repair
* a lockable drawer or cupboard for records and staff members’ personal belongings
* areas to display children’s work and a notice area for parents/carers
* a space for children to put their lunch, coats, bags and other items.

# Educational policy

**National Quality Standards (NQS)**

The NQS set an Australian benchmark for the quality of education and care services. This enables families to make informed decisions about the services providing education and care to their children. The NQS are a key aspect of the National Quality Framework.

The NQS was informed by research about best practice and the way in which high quality education and care contributes to positive outcomes for children. It comprises quality areas, standards and elements. The seven quality areas in the NQS are

* Educational program and practice
* Children’s health and safety
* Physical environment
* Staffing arrangements
* Relationships with children
* Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
* Leadership and service management.

The NQS is linked to national learning frameworks that recognise children learn from birth and outline practices to support and promote children’s learning.

**Programming and evaluations**

TCKC is committed to providing a quality program where the children’s physical, emotional, intellectual and social needs are met in a safe, caring, and supportive environment.

The service provides a program where children have access to a wide variety of safe and stimulating age and developmentally appropriate activities, including indoor and outdoor opportunities. They are developed to cater to the social, intellectual, physical and emotional needs and interests of all children present.

The program reflects the importance of play in childhood, cultural diversity of the community, abilities of the children, and individual uniqueness, whilst incorporating the views of parents/carers and the children attending the service.

Programs are strength based, inclusive, non-gender, culture or age specific and are developed in consultation with parents/carers and the community and reflect the service’s philosophy, goals, vision and mission.

The service’s programs are evaluated regularly and include feedback, suggestions, comments and views from parents/carers, children, service staff and the community and are displayed within the service.

Information collected from parents/carers via the Enrolment forms is taken into consideration in the programming.

Children with special and/or additional needs are encouraged to participate in all activities. These activities may be modified by staff to ensure that all children are treated with dignity and their uniqueness and individually respected.

The service welcomes family contributions to aspects of the programming through donations of resources, equipment, and invited participation in activities.

**Kindergarten Learning Guidelines**

As a Queensland Kindergarten Program provider TCKC implement the accredited Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline.

The Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline supports our qualified Early Childhood teachers to deliver quality, consistent programs. It provides specific advice for kindergarten teachers to: interact with children; plan, monitor and assess learning; and share information with parents/carers about their child’s learning.

Learning experiences are planned that are relevant to the children’s interests, experiences and needs.

Children are provided with opportunities to express ideas and opinions, make choices, share decision making and be involved in the reflection process.

The Guideline embraces and promotes continuity and inclusivity so all children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life.

The Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline promotes partnership, continuity of learning and supports children to move into the first year of school.

# Staffing

**Ratios**

The educator to child ratios for 36 months olds to kindergarten age children is 1:11.

The educator to child ratios for OSHC school aged children is 1:15.

**Rosters**

Staff rosters are displayed in an area accessible to parents/carers. Rosters contain the following information (by group where appropriate).

* number of children
* educators
* details of first aid and CPR qualifications
* demonstration of the presence of two staff or alternative arrangements.

**Qualification requirements**

Under the National Law (section 169) the approved provider and nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that each educator meets the qualification requirements relevant to the educator’s role.

**Kindergarten**

When delivering a Kindergarten program, it is a funding requirement to have a suitably qualified early childhood teacher. Centre-based services are required to have access to or attendance of an early childhood teacher. The requirements are based on the size of the service.

National educational qualifications are prescribed for educators working directly with children preschool age or under. At least 50 percent of educators in a service must have (or be actively working towards) at least an approved diploma level education and care qualification. The remaining educators necessary to meet minimum educator-to-child ratios are required to have (or be actively working towards) at least an approved certificate III level education and care qualification.

**All services**

All staff within services will hold a Positive Notice Blue Card.

# Enrolment and orientation

**Enrolment**

TCKC as the Approved Provider of the service, is required to maintain a record of each child to ensure safe and appropriate compliance with legislation.

Each year, a new enrolment form must be completed by parents/carers prior to the commencement of the new year.

**Kindergarten**

* Children who turn 4 years of age before 30 June in the year prior to starting school can attend kindergarten.
* Younger children (minimum 3 years of age) may participate in a kindergarten program where vacancies exist but are not eligible for QKFS subsidies.

**OSHC**

* Children may enrol in any component of the service: Before and/or After School and/or Vacation Care.
* Prior to the commencement of each new school year a re-enrolment package must be completed for continuing children.
* Children can attend OSHC from 1 January in the year they start Prep (proof of enrolment application for new prep children is required).

It is important all information is updated regularly and communicated to the service in writing.

Bookings are essential. Limitation on vacancies is dictated by approved capacity of the service and staffing availability. The enrolment form **must be completed in full**, including family information and child details.

At the time of enrolment parents/carers will be required to nominate days/sessions on which children will be attending.

Permanent bookings are where a child attends on regular booked days. Permanent bookings will remain in place for the nominated period or until written cancellation is received by the service.

Casual bookings are where a child attends on an irregular basis and depends upon availability of vacancies at any one session.

**Orientation**

Enrolment and orientation experiences enable the service and families to work toward the common goal of promoting consistent quality outcomes for individual children and the service.

The orientation process provides the opportunity for families and staff to discuss the individual needs and care arrangements for each child.

New children will be introduced and welcomed to the group and staff will show new children safe and suitable approved areas the children can access. Staff will assist all new children to settle in to ensure they are feeling welcome. The service has an open-door policy and encourages families to spend time with their children in the service. At all times families and children are encouraged to ask questions, provide feedback and offer suggestions about the service and its program.

Further information and policy documents regarding enrolments and orientation are available upon request.

**Please note:** The service will endeavour to access an interpreter service if required.

**Kindergartens only**

Evidence of date of birth is to be provided by the child’s parent/carer prior to enrolment.

This evidence can include a copy of a birth certificate, statutory declaration, passport or other government issued document stating the child’s date of birth (eg letter from Medicare).

A child may be approved to access delayed entry to, or delayed exit from, a kindergarten program. In such cases, parents/carers will be eligible to claim the relevant subsidies.

**Enrolment in multiple programs**

Each eligible child can only access funding for one government approved kindergarten program at a time.

**Prioritising access to kindergarten places**

The kindergarten promotes fair and equitable access to a kindergarten program, including those children who face barriers to participation. Priority will be given to eligible funded kindergarten children.

**Priority of access**

Child Care Providers are asked to consider prioritising children who are

* at risk of serious abuse or neglect
* a child of a sole parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment.

This reflects the Australian Government’s intention to help families who are most in need and support the safety and wellbeing of children at risk in accordance with the Framework for protecting Australia’s Children 2009-2020.

TCKC priorities for placement include

* siblings of children already enrolled at the service
* children attending the Catholic School.

**Insurance**

TCKC/Parish/School maintains appropriate and current insurance policies. These include but are not limited to

* General insurance for building, property and equipment
* Public liability insurance (minimum $10 million)
* Workcover and volunteer’s insurance (if applicable)
* Fidelity guarantee insurance.

Insurance is held through Catholic Church Insurances (CCI) and Workcover Queensland.

Each service also provides ‘School Care Insurance’ for each child who attends. This insurance policy may assist with a contribution toward out of pocket expenses following an injury or incident that occurred while the child was in care.

Please feel welcome to discuss any queries in relation to this cover with the Kindergarten Director or OSHC Coordinator.

**Kindergartens**

**Fee subsidies**

**Additional fee support (kindergarten)**

The Queensland Government provides a range of subsidies to approved kindergarten program providers through the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme (QKFS) to reduce the out-of-pocket expenses for families.

**Eligibility**

To be eligible for QKFS Plus Kindy Support a family must meet one of the criteria below.

* The family, or the child, must present a current Australian Government Health Care Card (HCC), Veterans Affairs Card or Australian Government Pension Concession card with automatic HCC entitlements or formal communication, such as a letter, from the relevant agency stating the intent to issue an HCC. Foster families with an HCC may also claim the subsidy.

OR

* The child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and the family chooses to identify them as such on their enrolment form.

OR

* The family has three or more children of the same age, enrolled in the same year. QKFS Plus Kindy Support is available for each child enrolled in a program.

QKFS Plus Kindy Support can only be claimed once per child regardless of how many of the above criteria they meet.

Provided the child/family meets the eligibility requirements for QKFS Plus Kindy Support at any point during the semester they are entitled to funding for the full semester.

For information about subsidies, visit: [www.business.qld.gov.au/industry/service-industries/childcare/qld-kindergarten-funding-scheme/subsidies](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/industry/service-industries/childcare/qld-kindergarten-funding-scheme/subsidies)

Source: hhtps://www.business.qld.gov.au/industry/service-industries/child-care/qld-kindergarten-funding-scheme/subsidies

**Child Care subsidies**

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is the main way the Government assists families with their childcare fees.

The Child Care Subsidy commenced on 2 July 2018, replacing the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR) with a single, means-tested subsidy. The Child Care Subsidy is generally paid directly to childcare providers to be passed on to families as a reduction in fees.

There is also targeted additional fee assistance for vulnerable families through the Childcare Safety Net.

Families can get an estimate of what they may be entitled to by entering their details into the Department of Human Services Payment and Service Finder (<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/new-child-care-package-information-resources-families>)

Some basic requirement must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive the Child Care Subsidy for a child. These include

* the age of the child (must be aged 13 or under and not attending secondary school, expect in certain circumstances where an individual maybe eligible who does not meet the criteria, such as children with a disability or with a medical condition in certain circumstances)
* the child meeting immunisation requirements
* the individual, or their partner, meeting the residency requirements listed in the legislation.

In addition, to be eligible for Child Care Subsidy the individual must be liable to pay for care provided, the care must be delivered in Australia by an approved childcare provider, and not be part of a compulsory education program.

There are three factors that determine the family’s level of Child Care Subsidy. These are

* combined annual family income
* activity test – the activity level of both parents
* service type – of childcare service and whether the child attends school.

# 

# Privacy statement

TCKC collects personal information directly from you and from third parties for the purposes of providing you and your child with a range of care and support services, volunteering opportunities; sending you newsletters or other information that may be of interest of you; for purposes or other information that may be of interest to you; for purposes related to the performance of our functions or activities or as required by law. We collect, use and disclose sensitive information about you and your child with your consent. We may disclose information about you or your child to service providers, Commonwealth or State departments, or any other party that assists us in providing services or operating our business.

**Maintenance of records**

The service maintains detailed records about the children, parents/carers and staff in order to safeguard the wellbeing of all and to provide full legal protection. Privacy rights are protected by information about children, parents/carers and staff being stored in a secure and locked location.

An approved provider must keep records for at least the following stated times

1. Record relating to a child in care

* about an illness or injury suffered while in the services’ care – until the child turns 25
* about the child’s death while in the service’s case – six years after the death
* otherwise – three years after the last time childcare is provided to the child under the service.

1. A record relating to a staff member – three years after employment ceases.
2. Another record – three years after the record is made.

These records are only accessed by relevant persons who require them for any legal reason or if the information is needed to fulfil any responsibilities to the children or the service.

# Bookings, absences and cancellations

TCKC endeavours to provide support for the families of children in its care in order to maximise available vacancies. Assistance is requested of parents/carers to notify in writing any changes/requests for care requirements in advance.

A permanent booking is where a child with a current enrolment attends regular booked days/ session.

A casual booking is where a child with a current enrolment attends on an irregular basis (based on vacancies and absences).

The ‘Request for booking form’ requires parents/carers to nominate the preferred days of attendance for their child/children. These days will remain in place for the period indicated on the form or until written cancellation/notification is received. Changes to bookings will need to be submitted to the Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator in writing as per the TCKC fee procedure.

**Kindergartens**

Parents are required to notify the service of any absences and to sign the absence on the daily sign in/out sheet or via electronic sign in/out.

Fees are charged at the beginning of each kindergarten term, for that term.

Fees are required to be paid in full prior to the end of the term.

**OSHC**

In order to receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) for absences, parents are required to sign the absence on the service’s daily sign in/out sheet or via electronic sign in/out.

CCS is paid for up to 42 days absences for each child per financial year. All absences beyond the first 42 days will only be paid for if parents/carers provide evidence that the absence has occurred under a permitted circumstance.

Follow the links to [www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.gov.au) for more information.

Notice is required if children are unable to attend on booked days. If notice is not provided, the childcare benefit (if applicable) may not be payable and full fees will be charged for all absences.

Fees are charged as follows during a child’s absence.

* Full fees are charged for all absences (including sickness).
* Full fees are not charged during the Christmas break when the service is closed.
* Notice is required if child/children are unable to attend on booked days.
* Fees are not charged for public holidays where the OSHC service is closed.

**Cancellations and alterations**

Families wishing to cancel or alter a permanent booking must submit the cancellation/ alteration in writing to the OSHC Coordinator, giving a minimum of two weeks’ notice.

Should the service need to cancel an enrolment, the OSHC Coordinator will follow the cancellation of an enrolment procedure as per the TCKC Enrolment procedure and/or the TCKC fee procedure.

The CCS will only apply at the service until the child’s last day of actual attendance. The child must attend their final day of care to be able to claim CCS otherwise full fees will apply. Any absences prior to the child’s initial absence will also attract full fees.

# Sign in/Sign out

All children are to be signed in and out by an authorised person.

In addition, the authorised person signing a child in or out on the attendance sheet must

* note the time
* print their name
* sign the entry
* or, alternatively, complete sign in/out process on the device provided.

Responsibility for the child begins when the child is signed in by an authorised person. Responsibility ends when the child is signed out by an authorised person.

Staff ensure that children are only collected by person/s authorised on the enrolment form. If there is any change, the Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator requests notification from the parent/carer in writing.

When written authority is not possible, permission via telephone maybe given for an alternative person to collect the child. The parent/carer must provide the name and description of the person concerned and proof of their identity is required on arrival. If written authority is not available at the time, the parent/carer should then sign the person onto the authorised persons’ list as soon as practicable.

No child is permitted to travel home or to another activity on their own unless written approval is received, or in an emergency, with verbal approval. These records (including documentation of verbal approval) are to be kept on file.

# TCKC procedures

**Excursions**

Services may at time include excursions into the local and wider community which extends the program by offering new learning experiences, new social contexts and interactions. These excursions take into account the age, interests and abilities of the child.

An excursion is an experience outside of school grounds and jurisdiction. On an excursion, the staff/child ratio is maintained. Permission from parents/carers is sought prior to attendance on excursions. A risk assessment is completed for each excursion.

Safety is an essential part of all excursions and they are only undertaken after discussion with the Senior Manager: Kindergarten and Care. In order to ensure risk management standards are maintained the following steps will be followed.

* Permission from parents/carers is obtained on the excursion permission form provided.
* If the excursion is liable to be affected by the weather a contingency plan is developed.
* Appropriate transport is engaged and buses with seatbelts are contracted wherever possible.
* A contingency plan in case of vehicle breakdown is prepared. Such a plan includes methods to ensure children are kept safe and comfortable and provides for access to water and snacks if applicable.

During an excursion the following applies.

* A qualified first aid officer is present.
* A first aid kit is available.
* An attendance record or roll is available.
* Emergency contact numbers for participants and staff is available.
* Telephone access is available.
* The roll is checked, and headcounts are conducted regularly during the day to ensure all children are accounted for, particularly when transitioning from one activity area to another.
* Staff ratios, based on a risk assessment, are strictly adhered to as a minimum.
* In addition to maintaining legislated ratios, staff escort and supervise children to and from toilet and change room facilities.

Staff ensure the environment is safe. This may entail (as appropriate)

* a pre-excursion visit
* requesting copies of recent safety inspection reports
* requesting copies of registration as a workplace
* ensuring equipment is age appropriate and non-gender specific.

If staff become aware the excursion is likely to return late to the service, all reasonable attempts will be made to contact parents/carers either individually by phone or by arranging a notice to be placed outside the service with an expected time of arrival.

Children are never left in the sole care and custody of bus drivers or any other persons during excursions.

**Transportation of children**

The service takes steps to ensure transport utilised for excursion purposes is safe. Educators refer to <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Infosheet-SafeTransportationOfChildren.pdf> for the latest information about the Transportation of children.

**Water-based activities and swimming**

For all water-based activities and swimming activities the staff/child ratio is maintained as one adult to every five children. For further information please refer to TCKC Water safety procedure.

**On site movement**

If children are moving regularly between a co-located or adjoining service and a school site (eg OSHC children are escorted by educators to the tennis court or library) within school grounds it is not necessary for written consent to be provided.

A risk assessment is completed for each location and activity, outside of the usual service area, to determine appropriate staff/child ratio and to ensure the safety and security of all parties.

**Extracurricular activities**

If your child/children are required to attend extracurricular activities on the school site arranged by the school or another provider, please request an ‘Extracurricular Activities Form’ from the OSHC Coordinator, complete all details and sign it to acknowledge consent.

Permission must be granted for each extracurricular activity your child/children is to attend. When there are changes or amendments to the extracurricular activities schedule, a new form must be signed and submitted. Please note children will not be able to attend off site activities.

Parents/carers are to notify the service if the extracurricular activity is cancelled on that day. Notification prior to the time the extracurricular activity normally takes place is essential.

When parents/carers elect for their child to attend an extracurricular activity, they provide permission with the understanding that the service may not have available staff to escort children to each extracurricular activity. A variety of arrangements are made onsite in relation to children accessing the appropriate locations. This should be discussed with the OSHC Coordinator when the parent/carer provides the signed authorisation.

**Homework**

OSHC recognises the importance of homework. Whilst it is the policy of the service that homework is a parent/child responsibility (and an optional afternoon activity) we endeavour to create a time and place whereby homework maybe completed. Educators are able to assist with homework from time to time depending on numbers and ratio requirements, however, staff cannot mark or correct the child’s work.

It is the service’s responsibility to provide

* a quiet area and environment
* a well-lit area for homework to be undertaken
* supervision
* some requisites such as pencils and paper maybe provided where necessary.

**Mobile phones**

It is recognised that some children have mobile phones however, children should not use mobile phones whilst at OSHC unless there is a genuine and urgent need to do so.

All mobile phones must be clearly labelled with the child’s name to ensure the correct phone is returned when the child is signed out.

If a child needs to use a phone during the course of their attendance at the service, they must ask the OSHC Coordinator for the use of the service’s landline to make the necessary call.

If parents/carers need to contact children during the course of the session it is necessary, that they do so via the service’s contact number/s.

The purpose of the above is to

* manage the risk of children contracting or being contracted by external, inappropriate or unauthorised persons
* assist with child protection risk management
* minimise the risk of theft of mobile phones
* ensure the privacy of other children and staff is not breached through the use of mobile phone internet, cameras, videos and other MMS devices.

# Children

**Staff interactions and relationships with children**

The service aims to provide a responsive and inclusive environment for children where the educators relate to them in a friendly and respectful manner. Educator interactions with children are further enhanced through program implementation and daily communication.

**Respect for children**

This service is a place where children, educators and parents/carers are treated as individuals and their cultural and gender differences are respected. Our services include everyone in daily programmed activities and we endeavour to meet the needs of each child and family within the parameters of equipment, resources and facilities available.

The dignity and right of the child are respected at all times. The service promotes the use of positive behaviour support techniques when guiding a child such as encouragement, appreciation and modelling appropriate behaviour.

At our services we will endeavour to:

Provide a childcare environment that enhances the emotional and physical health of the child, stimulates the children’s involvement in activities and encourages self-esteem and a sense of achievement.

* Provide a variety of options to help children be a part of the decision-making process.
* Provide children with uninterrupted play periods where they can become fully involved in and extend and complete activities.
* Ensure interactions with children are always consistent, harmonious, fair, warm and sensitive. Service staff encourage children to learn about their own rights and develop a respect for the rights of others.
* Ensure educators instructions are positive and age appropriate (eg ‘please walk’ instead of ‘don’t run’)
* Maintain a consistent routine and give children advance notice of what is happening next week as well as offer an explanation if a change must occur.
* Ensure confidentially (and that children are not within hearing distance) when discussing children’s behaviour with the parent/carer or Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator.

Ensure photographs of children are not taken or displayed without written permission from parents/carers as provided in the enrolment form. This includes videos, still film and digital images.**Inclusion and diversity**

Our service provides an inclusive and open program where all children are considered unique individuals and diversity is valued. We aspire to

* provide a variety of activities that encourage the participations of all children
* be aware of the children’s home environment and individual social needs
* cater for children from all cultural backgrounds who may have special dietary and/or communication requirements
* encourage interactions between gender and age groups in a positive way with organised activities and games
* encourage children to cooperate and to help each other with activities, games and routines
* provide a wide variety of materials (appropriate to developmental stage) in sufficient amounts to ensure any child is not waiting for long periods of time for their turn

cater, where possible, for children with special and/or additional needs, including staffing changes and special requirements associated with their care. **Children’s rights**

As participating members of our service children have a recognised right

* to a warm, caring atmosphere where they are seen as unique individuals
* to have fun and feel comfortable in themselves and with others
* to be treated justly, fairly and sensitively and to have their grievances heard
* to be acknowledged for their achievements
* to be treated with courtesy and respect
* to be treated consistently and equitably by service staff
* to play and be challenged in a safe environment
* to be involved in the development of the rules of behaviour, the aesthetics of the service and other aspects of the program.

**Children’s responsibilities**

As participating members of our service children have clear responsibilities

* to be courteous and respectful to other children and to educators, parents and visitors to our service
* to participate in activities with an attitude aimed towards learning and having fun
* to show care for belongings whether their own, others, or belonging to the service
* to cooperate with educators and peers to further improve the quality of time shared together
* to remember, follow and respect service and school rules and boundaries whilst at the service.

**Child concerns**

The service respects and supports all children’s rights to express their concerns and grievances. The children are informed of the grievance process and procedures when they first attend the service. Reminders of the procedures are ongoing through service newsletters, general group discussion and when children are assembled for information sharing.

Staff actively listen to and encourage the children to express their likes, dislikes, concerns or feedback regarding any aspect of the services operation during planned and spontaneous activities.

The service employs educators who have a sound knowledge of child development. They are encouraged to continuously update their skills through professional development. This ensures they are able to support children to express their ideas and opinions by guiding them through the various age appropriate feedback mechanisms in a safe environment.

All ideas and opinions/feedback collected from children are given due consideration and maybe used in program and service evaluation. We feel it is important that children’s concerns and feedback are acknowledged.

**Emergencies**

Children and staff of the service participate in lockdown and evacuation procedures every term, so as to ensure that in the event of an emergency, all in attendance are familiar with the procedures. The service evacuation and lockdown procedures and a map of the service’s licensed areas and evacuation points are displayed at all entrances/exits to the service. These procedures are reviewed each time a lockdown or evacuation is completed.

To view a more comprehensive copy of the service’s policies and procedures, please do not hesitate to contact the Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator.

**Toys and games**

Children and families are strongly requested not to bring toys or games to the service. The service and its educators accept no responsibility for loss or damage to personal items.

# Families and communication

**Parent/carer involvement**

Our service has an open-door policy, which means you are most welcome to come and spend time with your child.

The staff will ensure you and your child feel safe, happy and welcome at the service.

As parents/carers you are welcome to visit during hours of operation to ensure confidence in the service provided. A continuing exchange of ideas and information is important and enhanced with open communication and we welcome any suggestions or comments you may have.

Your involvement in the service can vary depending on your availability.

**Methods of communication**

The service may use a variety of media to keep parents/carers informed of changes happening in relation to legislation or service operations, introducing new educators, as well as any other information relevant to the service.

From time to time important information is displayed in the parent/carer information area or in either the service, school or parish newsletters.

In our parent/carer area there is a selection of brochures about various topics relating, but not limited to, child development, child protection, health and nutrition, bullying, inclusion and diversity, and community resources.

We also encourage parents/carers to look at our collections of artwork, photos and other items of interest created by the children and displayed throughout the service.

# Advisory group

**Introduction**

The purpose of an Advisory group is to provide advice to the Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator on local issues and facilities.

**Membership of Advisory group**

* A member of an Advisory group must be a stakeholder in respect of the relevant service. The Kindergarten Director/OHSC Coordinator of the relevant service must be a member of the Advisory group.
* A member of an Advisory group, other than members who are family members of a child in care, must hold a current valid permit under any child protection law,

**Functions of the Advisory group**

The functions of an Advisory group may include

* providing advice to the service on issues relating to its affairs including, principally, the provision of care to children
* providing advice to the service to assist it to identify opportunities for stakeholders to work together to improve the service
* providing advice to the service to assist it to identify issues and problems and to develop solutions
* coordinating activities for the benefit of the service including working bees, fundraising and social activities, and facilitating wider community support of the service
* facilitating effective communication between the service and the families of children in care regarding the service’s policies, procedures and operational matters.

# Collaborative community partnerships

**Positive approach**

TCKC values the importance of positive behaviour guidance and support that ensures children’s physical safety and emotional wellbeing. Positive behaviour guidance practices are supported by staff to enable children to develop skills to self-regulate their behaviour, preserve and promote self-esteem and have regard for wider community expectations.

At the core of an educator’s values in programming, relationship building, teaching and caring for children will be a strong sense of inclusiveness, acceptance tolerance, kindness, cooperation and respect for individual differences.

Educators recognise and understand that a child’s behaviour may be influenced by: their age, development and level of familiarity with the service’s routine and guidelines, general health and wellbeing, the service’s play and learning environments, educator’s teaching strategies and caring practices, relationships with other children and stakeholders, and other external factors such as home and family environment, school as well as peer group experiences.

**Consultation**

Families will be consulted about issues or problems regarding behaviours. Support strategies will be developed and established which encourage children’s development of effective social-emotional skills which enables them to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

Source: Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and My Time Out Place (MTOP) framework.

**Strategies**

In relation to providing positive behaviour guidance, all educators and care givers will use the following strategies to develop good outcomes for children

* model appropriate behaviour, including using positive language, gestures, facial expressions and tone, and volume of voice
* be engaged with and monitor children’s play, be aware of triggers for potential conflicts or challenging situations, and will support children to consider alternative behaviours
* introduce problem solving as a teaching and learning opportunity with children, in collectively deciding on rules and ways to work together successfully
* clearly express boundaries for behaviour in positive terms and reinforce consistently in a developing appropriate way
* support children to make appropriate choices, accept challenges, manage change, cope with frustration and to understand and experience the consequence of their actions
* maintain consistency amongst all educators in a holistic approach to facilitate and encourage children to recognise and choose positive behaviour
* recognise that children’s behaviour may reflect an attempt to satisfy their basic need (Glasser, 1988) safety and survival, love and belonging, power (so they feel respected and heard), freedom and choice, and fun
* view all behaviour as an opportunity to guide, reach and encourage positive social and emotional interaction and communication
* organise resources and learning environments so children are engaged, given boundaries and offered clear and simple directions that invite and encourage success.

The following strategies may be adopted to identify and manage challenging behaviour.

* Provide a calming, quite environment for the child to allow them space and time to gain an emotional stability before discussing the event.
* Talk to the child quietly away from the rest of the group. The child will be given the opportunity to think about and talk through their version of the event and offered support in making better choices in future. The child and educator will plan how to maintain their new, wiser decisions.

**Managing extreme or persistent behavioural challenges**

If a child’s behaviour places themselves, other children or staff at risk, educators will act immediately to mitigate the risk and then talk through the issue with the child or children concerned.

Where a child presents repetitive behavioural challenges, a behaviour support plan will be developed in collaboration with parents/carers, the child, other educators and other stakeholders.

At the core of making the decision to develop an individual behaviour support plan will be the needs of the child.

If the unacceptable behaviour persists, the responsible person in charge at the service may, in collaboration with the family and other stakeholders, need advice from an appropriate agency or professional practitioner.

Exclusion of a child from a service will only take place where all strategies employed to deal with persistently challenging behaviour have been exhausted.

**Parent/carer involvement**

Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the efforts of educators in maintaining a safe and respectful recreational environment for all children.

Parents/carers should encourage their children to appreciate the importance of honesty, respect for property and respect for the rights of others.

Parents/carers who participate positively in fulfilling these obligations recognise the systems and processes in place will benefit all.

Parents/carers should

* support the Catholic ethos of the service
* complete an enrolment form for each child every year
* notify the service of required bookings and any alterations in a timely manner
* notify the service of any absences due to illness within the acceptable timeframe
* follow the service absence and cancellation procedures
* read the parent information flyers and discuss with children where appropriate
* participate in the services Advisory group and fundraising events (if applicable)
* work collaboratively with educators to resolve any behavioural issues which may arise
* communicate positively with all children at the service, physical contact is discouraged.
* pay accounts promptly, bearing in mind the service is not-for-profit and does not attract funding
* follow the TCKC Grievance procedure when expressing concerns or complaints to educators
* always speak in respectful tones and use positive language
* communicate positively with educators.

**Parent/carer responsibilities**

As a parent/carer of children attending the service certain responsibilities are inherent and are as follows.

* to support the philosophy and goals of the service and the Catholic ethos and values
* to support the service in its endeavours to provide a quality service for all children
* to work cooperatively with educators in the development of behaviour support plans (as required)
* to read and be familiar with the services philosophy and goals, and follow policies and procedures
* to understand the TCKC Grievance procedure and to raise concerns in a timely and respectful manner to the Kindergarten Director/OHSC Coordinator
* to sign children in and out on a daily basis and to make sure no unauthorised person is sent to collect a child without first contacting the Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator
* to value the diversity and uniqueness of all children attending the service
* to approach all communication with educators, volunteers and other parents/carers in a friendly and respectful manner
* to approach the Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator of the service if wishing to address a concern involving another child; children of other families are not to be approached directly
* to collect children by the service’s closing time
* to notify educators of any medical, dietary or personal needs of your child through regularly updating your child’s enrolment form
* to notify the Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator of changes to or cancellations of bookings
* to make regular payments of fees as per our TCKC Fees policy and procedure and to ensure your account is settled in full at the end of each term.

**Parent/carer rights**

Our service offers all parents/carers the right

* to know your child is in a safe and welcoming care environment
* to visit the service (notification is required)
* to expect support in your role as the primary carer of your child
* to be made aware of the services philosophy and goals, policies and procedures that oversee the operation of the service
* to be involved in the growth and development of the service and provide feedback
* to receive regular information from the service either by print or electronic media
* to collaborate and consult with educators regarding your child in a confidential environment
* to participate on the Advisory group (where available)
* to receive information on workshops, functions for/of the service and any other information which maybe of benefit to your family or impact on care practices in relation to your child in care
* to express concerns according to service policy and procedures, and have these addressed in a timely and respectful manner
* to be greeted by educators, volunteers and others associated with the service in a warm and welcoming manner
* to have access to records kept in relation to your child
* to view up-to-date information on staff qualifications
* to receive information on programs, equipment and resources
* to view the menu (if applicable) and provide feedback
* to view the current Certificate of Service Approval and Assessment Ratings
* to be involved in the National Quality Framework (NQF) process
* to be informed of any continuous improvement plans.

**Parent concerns**

Where a concern is raised, educators are able to direct you to the Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator or the responsible person in charge. Their role is to immediately take the necessary action in an effort to resolve the complaint.

**Procedure**

If you have any concerns with the service or an educator, you are asked to address the concern to the Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator of the service, who may then request a written report.

If you have any concerns with the Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator you are asked to address the concerns to Senior Manager: Kindergartens and Care.

In the event that you are not satisfied with the outcome, contact the Office of Early Childhood, Education and Care, Department of Education and Training, GPO Box 15033,

City East Qld 4002.

# Health, nutrition and wellbeing

The service aims to work cooperatively with parent to develop a healthy approach to nutrition and hygiene. Food in the service is nutritious, prepared and stored in accordance with food safety requirements.

The service also acts diligently to control the spread of infectious diseases. All attempts are made to meet the health requirements of all children in the service.

Whilst the service endeavours to ensure the health and wellbeing of all children in its care, cooperation from parents/carers is essential. Up-to-date information on children’s health is part of the enrolment process. Should any changes occur after the child as been enrolled, parents/carers are required to provide the new information.

**Illness and infectious diseases**

Children who arrive at the service or who develop symptoms of an infectious illness or condition while at the service, are removed from contact with other children (if possible) as soon as the symptoms are detected, and the parent/carer contacted for immediate collection.

The child will be monitored by educators. Any child with symptoms that suggest they might be quite ill when being signed in by parents/carers will not be accepted until all symptoms have abated or until a written clearance from a doctor is sighted. Such symptoms may include the following

* elevated temperature, flushed colouring, unusual pallor
* coloured nasal discharge or repeated, severe coughing
* stomach-ache, vomiting or diarrhoea
* red or discharging eyes or ears
* undiagnosed skin rashes, sores or swellings
* unusual activity levels, irritability, restlessness.

**Procedure for caring for a child with an illness**

The service takes the following steps when caring for a child who becomes ill whilst attending the service.

* The staff member makes a note of the symptoms and complaints of the child.
* The child is directed to a quiet area of the room to rest and given water to drink.
* The staff member checks the medical register or the enrolment information and ensures the child has no known medical conditions which could be causing or contributing to these symptoms.
* The staff member comforts the child and monitors for further symptoms or elevation of present symptoms.
* The staff member brings the situation to the attention of the Kindergarten Director/ OSHC Coordinator.
* The child is monitored, and parent/carer contacted if the symptoms of the infectious diseases section above occur, or if the child’s symptoms appear to be worsening.

If staff notice symptoms of an infectious condition, the child is removed from other children (if possible), however they will remain in the care of an educator and the parent/carer is contacted to immediately collect the child.

**HIV and Hepatitis**

The confidentially of medical information is maintained. The number of persons aware of the child’s condition is kept to the minimum needed to ensure proper care of the child and to detect situations where there is potential for transmission.

Following medical advice, it is expected that parents/carers would consult with childcare workers if their child has HIV infection or Hepatitis B, C, D, E.

When placing a child in care, who is HIV antibody positive or Hepatitis infected, a primary goal is the avoidance of any practice which violates the dignity of the child and the provision of a satisfactory standard of care to the child.

The service does not disclose information about the HIV or Hepatitis B, C, D, E infectious status of any person without that person’s consent or the consent of the child’s parents/ carers.

**Sleep, rest and relaxation**

TCKC is committed to

* promoting and implementing best practice guidelines for sleep, rest and relaxation based on current research
* adopting a collaborative approach between the service and parents/carers
* developing and implementing both a Sleep and rest policy and procedure based on the recommendations from Red Nose Safe Sleeping program
* adhering to the evidence based safe sleep practices and guidelines recommended by the Red Nose Safe Sleeping program

providing cots, mattresses, beds and/or mats (ie sleep equipment) that complies with relevant Australian Standards.

**Exclusion periods**

The following are minimum periods of exclusion as recommended by Staying Healthy 5th Edition. These exclusion periods are the minimum period for the child to be away from the service, however, a child may need to stay at home longer than the exclusion period to recover from an illness.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **General illness** | |
| Conjunctivitis | Until discharge from eyes has ceased. |
| Fever | Any fever above 38oCis considered to be a sign of acute illness and the child is unfit to be at the service until the fever has fully resolved. |
| Diarrhoea / Giardia | Children wo have had diarrhoea must be excluded until at least 24 hours after diarrhoea has ceased. (This exclusion time is a recommendation from the Public Health Unit – Queensland Public Health). In addition, the service requires the child to be able to tolerate a reintroduction of their diet without the recommencement of the diarrhoea. |
| Vomiting | Children who have been vomiting must have ceased vomiting for 24 hours and have recommenced eating, prior to returning to the service. |
| **Viral respiratory** | |
| Infections (colds) | Children who have colds with fever, distress, or with severe nasal discharge, sneezing, coughing or wheezing are excluded for the period of acute illness. The service policy is that any child requiring regular administration of medication throughout the day maybe considered unfit to attend childcare. |
| **Contagious childhood illness** | |
| Chicken Pox | Until all blisters have dried. |
| Measles | Exclude for at least four days after onset of rash. Unimmunised children are required to be excluded from the Service until directed by Public Health advice. |
| German Measles | Until fully recovered or at least four days after the onset of rash. |
| Mumps | For nine days or until swelling goes down. |
| Whooping Cough | For five days after starting antibiotic treatment or 21 days from the onset of coughing. |
| Herpes/Cold Sores | Until lesions have dried. If the child is old enough to manage the infection, they can attend if sores are covered. |
| Head Lice | Re-admit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced. |
| Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease | Until all the blisters have dried. |
| Impetigo/School Sores | Re-admit once antibiotic treatment has commenced. Any sores on exposed surface should be properly covered with a dressing. |
| Ringworm | Re-admit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced. Any sores should be covered. |
| Rashes | A doctor must check all rashes to diagnose and provide medical advice. |
| HIV/Aids | Exclusion is not necessary unless the child has a secondary infection. |

**Hygiene**

Hand washing is one of the most important aspects of infection control at a service.

**Nutrition**

**Food provided by the service**

The aim for services that provide food is to ensure nutritious food is available.

Menus are displayed at the service. Should you require any further information please speak to the Kindergarten Director/OSHC Coordinator.

The service encourages positive learning experiences during meal and snack times where positive food habits are developed in a happy, social environment.

The service provides opportunities for children to experience food from different cultures.

**Food provided by parents**

Parents/carers are encouraged to provide nutritional food that contributes to their child’s daily recommended intake.

Food provided by parents/carers needs to be packed to ensure it is kept at the appropriate temperature if sending perishable foods. Please check with your service if refrigeration is available. Food cannot be reheated by the service.

**Special dietary needs and allergy awareness**

The service is supportive of special dietary requirements of children in care. Parents/carers are free to discuss their child’s needs, including, but not limited to any food allergies, restrictions (cultural or religious) and how the service can support parent to meet the child’s dietary requirements.

A regularly updated list of children who have special dietary requirement will be displayed in the kitchen/food preparation area.

Parents/carers are to note details of restrictions and/or ‘special’ diets on the enrolment form and where necessary the meal can be supplied from home.

Parents/carers maybe requested not to send food that may present a risk for those with special dietary needs. Please see your Kindergarten Director/OHSC Coordinator for details.

Due to the serious allergic reaction some products pose to some children who may attend the service, we strongly recommend children do not consume (while in care), products known to contain allergens.

We endeavour to reduce the risk of allergic reactions by removing, to the best of our knowledge, products containing known allergens for cooking and food served by the service.

**Sun protection**

The service requires educators and children to be sun safe and as such we have in place certain measures to ensure the children are protected from over exposure to the sun.

School age children are monitored and informed and also encouraged to be aware of and manage their personal sun protection.

**First Aid**

First aid equipment is available for educators to use at all sites for the first aid treatment of all persons at the service in the event of an illness or incident. The first aid kit is kept in a place that is clearly signed and out of reach of children but easily accessible to the service staff.

At least one educator qualified in first aid, CPR, asthma management and anaphylaxis is on duty at all times while children are in attendance.

Parents/carers are to sign and authorise the enrolment form for educators to administer first aid when necessary, this is an important and required component of enrolment.

In the event of an illness or injury to a child, first aid is administered by an educator qualified in first aid.

If medical assistance is required, parents/carers are contacted immediately. In the event a medical emergency occurs which requires transportation of a child to a medical facility every effort is made to accompany the child where possible and appropriate, however, there will be no action taken in this regard if the service is at risk of beaching the staff/child ratio requirement.

If a child receives a minor injury during the operation of the service, educators will complete a TCKC Incident report form as soon as practical and parents/carers are required to sign this form.

Should the child require medical attention, a fully completed Reporting of serious injury form is necessary and will be forwarded for signing to the Senior Manager: Kindergartens and Care and they must submit this form to ECEC.

**Drugs, alcohol and smoking**

Consuming drugs and alcohol are not permitted within the service’s approved areas and/or approved hours of operation.

The service respects the need to provide a healthy and safe workplace and to ensure staff and our clients enjoy fresh air. Each service is designated as a smoke free place and no person may smoke in any designated smoke free site. Smoking must not, under any circumstance take place in the presence of children.

# Administration of medication

A child with an acute illness requiring regular administration of medication throughout the day, is considered unfit to attend care. Medications for administration during service hours must only occur when necessary and essential for the child’s wellbeing.

When a child is returning to the service with prescribed medication, parent’s/carer’s responsibilities are to

* ensure medication is in its original container and has a pharmacist label clearly stating the child’s name, dosage, frequency of administration, date of dispensing and expiry date
* complete an ‘Authorisation of medication form’ when the child attends and medication is required; the form will require information such as the name of the child, the name of the medication, dosage, storage requirements, how it is to be administered (eg ear drops, oral medicine, nebuliser etc) and how often it is to be administered
* complete a ‘Risk management plan’ with the Responsible Person in charge for a child with a diagnosed medical condition or where a medical management plan and/ or action plan has been provided by a Medical Practioner.
* hand the medication and the ‘Authorisation of medication form’ to an educator upon arrival at the centre; parents/carers must not leave medication in the child’s bag
* collect medication on departure from the service
* confirm the child was given the required medication by speaking with the appropriate staff on collection of the child.

**Please note:** In the interests of children’s safety and wellbeing, the service will only administer medication if the medication is in the original container with the dispensing label attached naming the child and the dosage to be given. (Staying Healthy 5th Edition 2013)

**Allergies**

Please advise the service as soon as you become aware of any allergies or medical conditions associated with your child. Please continue to keep the Kindergarten Director/ OSHC Coordinator up to date with any changes to your child’s condition. If your child is allergic or sensitive to any foods, lotions etc. please inform the Kindergarten Director/ OSHC Coordinator. An allergy listing is maintained for all children to ensure all staff are kept up to date. Completion of a Risk Management Plan is also required to be completed by the Responsible Person.

**Individual medical plans**

These will be required to assist in managing some medical conditions. If your child requires an EpiPen, asthma medication or other specific treatment, please meet with the Kindergarten Director/ OSHC Coordinator prior to your child attending the service. A Risk Management Plan will be developed in consultation with parents/carers, the Kindergarten Director/ OSHC Coordinator and medical personnel.

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# Reference List

TCKC Employment guidelines

Children’s Services Award 2010

Commission for Children and Young People’s Act (QLD) 2000

Commission for Children and Young People Regulation (QLD) 2001

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Fair Work Act 2009

Food Act 2006: Food Regulation (supports the Act)

QCAN Policies and Procedures Manual, June 2011

Queensland Anti-discrimination Act 1991

Queensland Development Code; MP 5.4, Childcare Services

Food Standards Australia New Zealand Food Authority Standards 2010

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Towards Healing, National Committee for Professional Standards (Dec 2000)

Education and Care Services National Law 2010 (effective form 1/1/12)

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (effective from 1/1/12)

Know Your Rights, Racial Discrimination – AHRC 2012

Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011

Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 2011

National Quality Standards for Early Childhood 2011