



Maryland OOSH

Parent Handbook

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1. Welcome to OOSH

Welcome to Maryland OOSH Inc, we have an open door policy and hope that you find your time with our service a happy and rewarding one.

2. General Information

Maryland OOSH Inc cares for Children aged 5 to 12 years and operates Before School Care at 45 places, After School Care at 75 places and Vacation Care is a 60 place service. The service is managed through our Management Committee and coordinator of the service.

The service complies with the national standard for staff to child ratios, being 1:15 whilst in the centre and 1:8 when attending excursions.

The majority of children who access our service are the Maryland Public School Children, however we also welcome children from Glendore Primary and Plattsburg Primary. These children catch a bus from their schools and an Educator from Maryland OOSH greets them at the bus stop on Boundary Rd.

At Maryland OOSH we aim to provide enriching programs. We aim to gather families input into the programs to ensure the programs are meeting the interests and needs of the children.

During the school holidays and pupil free days Maryland OOSH also provides a Vacation Care program for children.

The service is closed on public holidays and for 2 weeks over the Christmas / New years period.

The Maryland OOSH is located on the grounds of Maryland Public School, John T Bell Drive Maryland 2287 NSW.

Our contact details are:

Po Box 183

Wallsend NSW 2287

P: 02 49 556273

M: 0467 217 230 (during emergency evacuations and Vacation Care excursions ONLY)

F: 02 49 550144

E: director@marylandoosh.com.au

admin@maryland.com.au

The Children's Services Head Office contact information is:

Locked Bag 5107

Parramatta NSW 2124

P: 02 9716 2222

F: 02 9716 2999

Maryland OOSH Service Provider Number – PR-00007737

Maryland OOSH Service Approval Number – SE-00013559

Our Hours of Operation are:

Before School Care: 6.30am-8.30am

After School Care: 2.30pm-6.00pm

Vacation Care: 8.00am-6.00pm

Should you have any questions please contact us.

3. Our Philosophy

Maryland O.O.S.H aims to provide High Quality Care and recreation for School aged children during Before school care, After school care and Vacation Care which will reflect the diversity of the community.

We Believe:

- Providing a friendly and welcoming environment develops a sense of belonging to children and their families
- Children have the right to a stimulating, friendly, safe and caring indoor and outdoor environments.
- Stimulating programs based on children’s interests and needs provide opportunities for children to explore, extend and develop new skills.
- With guidance children can learn to balance their own rights, needs and feelings with those of others and appreciate and care for each other and their surroundings.
- Programs and childrens learning will be made accessible to families.
- In an inclusive program and environment for all children and families sharing values, traditions and beliefs.
- Shared decision making with families and the community in the operation and development of the service.
- Families are the paramount influence in a child’s life
- Each child is unique and should be valued for their individual personalities and abilities
- Educators should be provided with ongoing professional development opportunities
- Educators need to be valued as individuals and respected for their unique and individual skills and abilities

4. Service Management Structure

Maryland OOSH is managed by committee members. Maryland OOSH welcome new members throughout the year. Officers within the committee are Chairperson, Vice

Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. Other roles may include: Assistant secretary, Assistant treasurer, Publicity officer, liaison officer, fundraising officer and public officer. All positions are open at the AGM.

The day to day management of the centre is delegated to a centre Coordinator

5. Our Educators

Maryland OOSH is committed to providing high quality care to your children. Management employ educators who have current working with children checks and Educators who demonstrate their commitment to providing high quality care to children and their families. Maryland OOSH employs a Nominated supervisor to be the responsible person on duty and certified supervisors. All employees hold current first Aid certificates and are trained in Asthma and Anaphylaxis.

6. Enrolment in Before and After School Care

Upon enrolling for the first time at Maryland OOSH, all families are subject to a security deposit which is held until the last child of the family leaves the service. The service also requires copies of birth certificates, immunisation records and ALL the form completed in full before places can be offered.

Placements will be given in accordance with the Priority of Access Guidelines set by the Commonwealth Department of Education. These are as follows:

1. A child at risk of serious abuse of neglect.
2. A child of a single parent/guardian who satisfies, or of parents/guardians who both satisfy the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999.
3. Any other child.

In the event we are unable to offer you and your children the sessions you require, you will be placed on the waiting list until a place is available.

a) Permanent Bookings:

At the end of the school year all current enrolments cease and bookings re-open in the new year. Bookings continue until all places have been filled. Places can be in high demand and a waiting list may be in operation. Once a permanent booking has been accepted the enrolment will continue from term to term until the end of the year or until 2 weeks notice in writing is given to cancel the booking. Please contact the centre for a current fee schedule and to check availability.

b) Casual Bookings:

These can be booked by phoning the centre from 6:30am the day before the care is required. Casual places cannot be guaranteed. Families that arrive for care without being booked in will only be able to stay if there are places available. In this event additional charges apply. If there are no vacancies the families will not be permitted to stay, if the child arrives after school care families will be contacted to collect their child.

c) Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate:

Child Care Benefit reduces the cost of your total child care fees. The Child Care Rebate is additional assistance and covers 50 per cent of your out-of-pocket costs for approved child care. Further information is available from the Family Assistance Office on 136 150. It is the parent's responsibility to inform our service of the Customer Reference Numbers (CRNs) of both the child and the parent. Full fees are payable until the service has been advised of these numbers.

7. Fee Payments

Fees are to be paid TWO weeks in advance at all times. Our preferred method of payment is setting up a direct debit with your bank or automatic transfer set up to be paid fortnightly into the following account:

BSB 637 000
Account 781176206
Name Maryland OOSH Inc
Please reference your child's name

Payments can be made by:

- EFTPOS facility
- cheque, made payable to "Maryland OOSH Inc"

If accounts do not remain in advance you may be required to set up a direct debit to comply with centre policy and maintain your account.

We DO NOT accept cash.

A statement will be issued fortnightly.

Late Collection

The Centre closes at 6pm. To reassure your child and the centre educators, please phone if you are running late. A fee of \$10.00 for the first 5 minutes and \$15.00 for each 15 minutes or part thereof will be charged for late collection of children.

Over Due Fees

Parents/carers are encouraged to discuss any difficulties that they may have in paying fees with the Director who will discuss options with the Management Committee and make suitable arrangements for payment of fees. We may be able to provide special assistance or work out a payment plan.

If no previous arrangements have been made regarding overdue fees the centre will:

After 1 week:

Send a reminder note regarding overdue fees.

After 2 weeks:

Write a letter reminding them to discuss any problems they may be having in paying fees with the Director and informing them that their child/children's place may be cancelled if suitable arrangements can't be made within the next week to pay the fees.

After 3 weeks:

Personally approach the parent/carer and arrange for a meeting to discuss payment options and consequences if the fees are not paid. (This could result in the child/children losing their place at the centre)

After 4 weeks: Cancellation Of Care

The Service maintains the right to cancel care for any child/ children without notice if parent's/guardians fail to comply with the centre policies and procedures.

If no arrangements have been made to pay the fees or the agreement made has not been kept the child's place will be cancelled and the security deposit will not be refunded.

If the above procedures are not effective, details of unpaid fees will be referred to the Management Committee to commence debt recovery procedures.

Cancellations

Parents/Carers are required to give two weeks notice in writing to cancel or change bookings. Any balance of fees owing must be paid for in FULL the week before the final day. Refunds will not be given for care not used due to absences/public holidays/sickness.

8. Policies and Procedures

Maryland OOSH has an extensive policy and procedures manual that is available at all times to families. This is located in the office. Each month there are selections of policies that are reviewed and families are encouraged to participate in this review.

a) Dropping off and Picking up

The OOSH program operates from 6:30 to 8.30am and 2:30pm to 6:00pm during the term and 8:00am to 6:00pm during vacation periods. The centre accepts responsibility for children from the time children are signed in to care.

On arrival the person delivering the child at the centre will be required to sign the child in with time of arrival on the attendance register. It is requested that the person delivering the child make the child's presence known to the educators on duty before leaving the child. Any special requirements can be communicated at the time.

Children must be signed off the roll when collected. Should a child be collected by someone else rather than the parent; the person is to be authorised and the signed permission be on file. A child will not be released into the care of a minor.

b) Transportation

Transportation of children from Before School Care to and from Glendore Public school and Plattsberg Primary School will be accompanied by an educator to and from the bus stops on Boundary Rd Maryland.

c) Absences

If your child is to be absent from Before or After School care it is essential that you notify the centre. ***(If you do not notify the centre prior to the rolls being marked there will be a non-notification fee added to your account).*** This will assist in ensuring the safety of all children. Absences are included in the weekly fee and no refunds are made. Families are currently allowed 42 absences per financial year per child before Child Care Benefits for absences are withdrawn.

d) Medication

Parents who wish medication to be administered to their child at the centre must complete a signed medication form. The prescribed medication must be handed to Centre educators and will only be administered from its original packaging. Non-prescribed medication will not be given unless a Doctors certificate is provided.

e) Allergies and Nut Free Policy

Our services are "Nut Free Zones". Please do not pack foods that contain traces of nuts particularly Peanut Butter and Nutella. Our service requires full allergy documentation prior to commencing care. Please contact the centre for a copy of our requirements.

f) Illness/Accident

If a child is unwell or involved in an accident and unable to join in activities, parents will be contacted to collect their child. In the event of a serious accident, medical assistance will be sought and parents notified as soon as possible.

g) Sun/Wet Weather Protection

To protect children from the elements we recommend the following; Parents ensure their children have adequate clothing including hats, long sleeved collared shirts preferred if not wearing school uniform, a raincoat and covered shoes, **no thongs**. Sun cream is to be applied to your child prior to arrival at the centre.

h) Confidentiality/Privacy

The personal details requested on all Children's Services forms are required under the Children and Young Persons (Care & Protection) Act 1998 and will only be used in connection with the requirements of this legislation. Access to this information is restricted to the centre and people authorised under the Act.

i) Child Management – Positive Behaviour Guidance

We provide an environment where all children, educators and parents feel safe, cared for and relaxed and which encourages co-operation and positive interactions between all persons. Rules are based on safety, respect for others, order, cleanliness and those which help create a caring environment. Positive behaviour will be encouraged, each child's unique characteristics will be positively acknowledged and self-discipline skills developed through example and direction.

Educators co-operate with families in order to better understand and to plan for each child's needs. Meetings can be arranged with the OOSH Co-ordinator to discuss your child's progress in the OOSH environment.

j) Emergency Drills

In the event that the service needs to be evacuated, we aim to conduct this in a rehearsed, timely, calm and safe manner to secure the safety of each person using the service. The safety and wellbeing of each child, educator and person using the service is paramount above any other consideration in the time of an emergency or evacuation. Any other procedures will be carried out only if it is safe to do so.

9. Before School Care Routine

At before school care we start the day in a happy and relaxed way. Educators open the service at 6:30am and provide breakfast to children. The room is organised according to the program and children's interests which includes game, craft activities and supervised physical activities outdoors. At 8:25am educators escort the children to the bus stop located on Boundary Road. The children are accompanied by an educator and the bus is met by a teacher on duty at the school. The remaining students from Maryland Public assist with educators in preparing for the start of their school day. Once the School bell is sound all children move over to the school grounds.

10. After School Care Routine

The bus is met at on Boundary Road for Glendore and Plattsberg primary schools and the children are escorted by the educators to the OOSH building.

Children and educators enjoy afternoon tea which consists of fresh fruit each day with a snack food such as, biscuits (vita wheats, cruskitts etc) with cheese, tuna and spreads, cakes, slices and more, as well as a small portion of a main meal such as pizza, spaghetti bolognaise, curried sausages, beef stroganoff and many more varieties of meals. Each afternoon there is a planned program of activities which includes arts/craft, board games, equipment for recreational activity, reading corner and a quiet area for homework. Educators will endeavour to assist with homework although they are employed to plan and actively supervise the program.

The children play freely outside, observing rules and boundaries, where the educators actively supervise the children, supply equipment, skipping ropes, balls etc and organise small and large group co-operative and competitive games. Each term the children are also invited to participate in the Active After School Care programs which offer the children sports such as Netball, AFL, Dance, Cricket and much more.

11. Vacation Care Routine

The Vacation Care Program is prepared during the school term by our Educators. A range of varied recreational activities and excursions to suit all ages, interests and levels is provided. Please refer to the Vacation Care program distributed 2 weeks prior to the end of term for further details of the program, enrolment and any other requirements.

All places for Vacation care MUST be paid in full before bookings can be secured

12. Programming

13. Complaints Handling

The Centres Grievance Policy serves to ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly and impartially. Complaints may be lodged in person, or by telephone, facsimile, email or letter, and should detail the name, address and contact numbers of the complainant together with a brief description of the problem.

14. Communication

The OOSH noticeboard is used to communicate between educators and families. Our Policy Handbook is available for families and is located in the office. Educators are always happy to discuss your child's progress in OOSH and a more formal meeting can be arranged by contacting the OOSH Director if required. Please look out for newsletters and notices in your pigeon holes. Financial statements will be emailed or printed to all families once a week, to be reviewed.

15. Useful Junk

The Educators at Maryland OOSH love using recyclable materials for craft and experiments with children. Useful items can be collected at home and donated to the centre throughout the year. Items include: Jars, wool, materials, boxes, books, paper towel rolls, tissue boxes, old clothing for home corner, scrap paper, shells, beads etc.

16. End of Year

Toward the end of each year families are required to complete new enrolment forms indicating their need for the New Year care. This process means that we have updated information on your children and family details.

As Christmas approaches we hold an end of year function for the children. We are able to present our year 6 children with an award and wish them all the best as they head off to high school. If we're lucky, Santa may even make an appearance.

Attached are some forms that will assist educators in getting to know your child and your family. Please complete these and return with your enrolment forms.

We Hope you enjoy your time with us. Please feel free to contact us or speak to us at any time.