

FAMILY AND SERVICE PARTNERSHIP POLICY

Policy Statement

Highgate School Outside School Hours Care (Highgate OSHC) have a legal responsibility to provide a safe environment for all children and staff. Highgate OSHC aims to create an environment that is welcoming and inclusive and supports a sense of belonging for children, families, and educators. Highgate OSHC acknowledges that family participation is an important part of making the service a true part of the community.

This policy will provide guidelines to promote desirable and appropriate behaviour to ensure that all interaction with children and adults are respectful. Highgate OSHC believes that all parents/guardians, family members and visitors play a crucial and valuable role in the effective operation of the centre. Highgate OSHC encourages family participation and open communication within the service. The service aims to do so through the enrolment and orientation process, policy review, feedback surveys, daily programs, documentation, formal and informal meetings, emails, and conversations.

This policy applies to all parents, carers, guardians, authorised nominees, visitors and family members of children enrolled in the service. The policy must be observed in all conduct and interaction with Highgate OSHC staff and other service visitors.

Implementation

The Director will ensure:

- Information is provided regularly to families regarding the content and operation of the program in relation to their child, and that a copy of the program is available for viewing at all times at the service.
- A weekly menu, which accurately describes the food and beverages provided each day, is displayed in a place accessible to families.
- Families are notified of any incident, injury, trauma, or illness that affects their child whilst at the service.
- The service has an administrative space that is adequate for the purpose of consulting with families and for conducting private conversations and meetings.
- Families are notified of changes to service policies.
- The enrolment and orientation processes provide families with information about the philosophy, policies, and practices of the service.
- Families are informed about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints.
- Families are encouraged to be involved in the program, provide feedback and provide input into the quality improvement of the service.
- Families are invited to review the service policies and routines.
- Families are provided with a range of communication methods which may include emails, verbal communication, newsletters, Xplor Home app, family notice board and phone contact.

Educators will:

- Be available for families on arrival and pick up to communicate about their child's session in care.
- Encourage ongoing open and direct two-way communication with families to develop trust and a collaborative relationship.

Families will:

- Provide accurate information on enrolment and medical information forms during the enrolment process.
- Notify the service when any information changes.
- Treat everyone in the service's community with respect, irrespective of age, gender, cultural background, religion, disability, vulnerability, or sexuality. This includes staff, volunteers, students, children, young people and families.
- Encourage their children to approach staff to resolve issues or concerns.
- Access and read all communication provided by the service via email or the Xplor Home app.
- Understand that staff may not read or respond to electronic communication on days they do not work, including weekends or out of service hours. Be respectful of staff's time and be aware that staff may take up to 48 hours to respond. Please note: electronic communication is not monitored outside of service hours.
- Share important information with the service that may affect your child's wellbeing.

Appropriate Communication

Families and authorised contacts shall be expected to communicate appropriately with all educators and staff at all times.

Appropriate communication shall include, but not be limited to:

- Showing empathy and valuing diversity of opinion and listening to others and their views.
- Valuing and trusting the expertise and status of staff and responding positively to staff communications.
- Maintaining non-aggressive behaviour by demonstrating respectful behaviour and language.
- Maintaining a respectful tone in all written and verbal communication.

Families are not permitted to discipline verbally or in any other way the children of other families. Should a parent/guardian have an issue or concern regarding the conduct of another child, family or member of staff, they shall follow appropriate grievance procedures (See Highgate OSHC's *Complaints and Grievances Policy*).

Offensive or disrespectful conduct will not be tolerated. This may include but is not limited to:

- When a parent/guardian exhibits behaviour prohibited by law.
- When a parent/guardian threatens physical or intimidating actions towards a child or adult.
- When a parent/guardian exhibits bullying behaviour, or is verbally abusive towards staff or a child.

Parent/guardians who display offensive or disrespectful conduct, will be faced with the following procedure:

- Warning letter 1 issued by Director
 - Specifies behaviour that was unacceptable
 - Reminder of the *Family and Service Partnership Policy*
 - Outlines how to raise a grievance using the *Complaints and Grievances Policy* if necessary

- Warning letter 2 issued by Director
 - Restates content of initial letter
 - States following steps if behaviour continues
- Warning letter 3 and barring notice issued by Approved Provider or their delegate
 - Restates content of above letters
 - Parent/guardian barred from the service for 2 weeks
 - Their child/ren may still attend provided they are dropped off and picked up by an alternative parent/guardian or authorised nominee
- Warning letter 4 and suspension notice issued by Approved Provider or their delegate
 - Restates content of above letters
 - Family's enrolment suspended for 1 month, the service's cancellation policy will not be applied
- Warning letter 5 and termination notice issued by Approved Provider or their delegate
 - Restates content of above letters
 - Family's enrolment terminated, the service's cancellation policy will not be applied

Please note:

Parent/guardians that have split accounts and face the above steps will only have this applied to the offending parent/guardian's account.

Above steps may be skipped at the discretion of the Director and the Police may be notified if families or visitor's conduct within the service is considered threatening or violent.

Approved by Highgate Governing Council 22nd February 2022

DATE OF EFFECT: 9th March 2022

REVIEWED: 2nd November 2022

TO BE REVIEWED: 2nd November 2023

Related Documents

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/national-law-and-regulations/national-regulations>

Education & Care Services National Regulations (2011) – Regulations 155, 156, 157

National Quality Standards – Standard 4.2, 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3.4, 7.3.4