



Learning Links OOSH and Vacation Care

On site at McCallums Hills Public School

Out of School Hours (OOSH) and Vacation Care



Family Handbook

Learning Links

12-14 Pindari Road, Peakhurst NSW 2210

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CONTACT DETAILS

For all general enquiries including information regarding fees, changes to bookings or cancellations please ask our Centre staff or contact Learning Links:

Address: 12-14 Pindari Road, Peakhurst NSW 2210

Phone: (02) 8525 8222

Fax: (02) 9584 2054

Email: mail@learninglinks.org.au

Website: www.learninglinks.org.au

Who is Learning Links?

Learning Links is a not-for-profit charitable organisation providing a wide range of educational and care services to children and young people from locations across metropolitan Sydney and NSW.

The provision of high quality OOSH and Vacation Care Services is part of our commitment to support the learning and development of all children. Learning Links has a strong history of providing a range of high quality educational and care services to children of all ages including long day care, preschool, school-aged after school activities and holiday programs as well as specific intervention programs based in schools to address learning difficulties and learning disabilities. We also offer educational support, therapy and counselling on a one-on-one and group basis.

Learning Links was established in Sydney's south in 1972 by parents concerned about the lack of appropriate education services to meet their children's learning support needs. Our mission is to provide children and youth who have difficulties learning with the skills, services and family support that enable them to reach their full potential with a Our vision of a community where difficulties learning and disadvantage is no longer a barrier to a fulfilling life.

Visit www.learninglinks.org.au to learn more.



SERVICE INFORMATION

About our OOSH & Vacation Care Program

Learning Links welcomes you to our OOSH and Vacation Care program. Our Centre offers a warm, caring and safe environment with a program that actively supports your child in their learning and development. Our Centre Program is based on the seven areas identified under the National Quality Framework as priorities across the development, implementation and review stages:

- Educational program and safety;
- Children's health and safety;
- Physical environment;
- Staffing arrangements;
- Relationships with children;
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities; and
- Leadership and service management.

The program incorporates fun play, leisure and learning activities and children are able to engage in a variety of supervised and structured learning and recreational activities each session. They will have the opportunity to rotate through activity stations in accordance with their individual preferences, social interactions and support needs. Activities are optional and children can choose to engage in what they are interested in. It may be purely recreational and play based activities but may also include:

- Homework support;
- Literacy corner, stories;
- Physical activities to develop fitness and coordination;
- Creative art projects;
- Music and drama experiences;
- Activities based on the development of social skills including board games.

A weekly program is planned by our staff. The program will be posted on the notice board with a schedule of activities so you know what is happening during the week. It also allows you and your child to prepare or bring special items if desired.



Staffing

All staff working at our Centre have experience working with children and schools to provide a safe, nurturing environment with consideration of the needs of all children. At our Centre the program is delivered by staff with the following qualifications:

- Manager - Degree in Primary or Early Childhood Education;
- Authorised Supervisor - Diploma of Children's Services (Outside School Hours Care);
- Additional staff - Diploma of Children's Services.

All our staff have a current First Aid Certificate and have undergone a comprehensive recruitment process that includes a Working with Children Check.

Daily hours of operation

Morning session:	7am – 9am
Afternoon session:	3pm – 6.15pm
Vacation Care:	7am – 6.15pm
Staff Development Days:	7am – 6.15pm

ENROLMENT AND ATTENDANCE

How to enrol

Families are required to complete registration for the program. Please complete a Learning Links OOSH Enrolment Form and ensure you complete it in full. Enrolment forms must be completed and provided by all participating families by December 2014. Late enrolments will be managed by a wait list at your school.



Please deliver your form to the Centre Coordinator or post your form to:

ATT: Learning Links OOSH Coordinator
12-14 Pindari Road
Peakhurst NSW 2210

Please be aware that you are required to re-enrol your child each year.

There is a registration fee of \$20 per year.

Priority of access

Our OOSH service provides the priority of access guidelines set down by the Federal Government to ensure that care is available for families who require that care, based on work and study commitments.

These guidelines are as follows:

- First priority is given to children at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
- Second Priority: a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the *'A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999'* Third priority is given to any other child.

Within each category the following children are given priority:

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families;
- Children in families which include a disabled person;
- Children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold or who or whose partner are on income support;
- Children in families with a non-English speaking background;
- Children in socially isolated families; or
- Children of single parents.

If you require further information please visit www.DEEWR.gov.au.

It is our aim to provide places for all children needing care, however please be aware that our session places are limited.



Types of care

We offer two types of care for children:

- Permanent care - for families requiring specific days of care on an ongoing basis.
- Casual care and emergency care - for families who require care on an irregular basis.

Casual care and emergency care are only available for children if there is availability on that particular day. Bookings can be made up to one month in advance prior to the session by notifying the OOSH Coordinator.

Every effort will be made to accommodate requests however the Centre reserves the right to decline a booking when places are not available.

Additional permanent bookings for OOSH & Vacation Care

Families attending OOSH who need an additional permanent session will need to notify the OOSH Coordinator in writing. If there is a vacancy it will be offered to your child immediately, however if there are no vacancies, your child will be placed on a waiting list and you will be notified when a position becomes available. Should a family decline the position when it is offered, the lodgement date for the new session will be altered to the date when the position was declined. Families may also need to complete a new Enrolment Form upon request.

Cancellations of bookings for OOSH

Cancellation of a permanent session must be done in writing, giving two week's notice to the Centre. After this period fees will be adjusted accordingly.

For cancellations of casual bookings, families must notify the centre as least 24hrs prior to the booked date. Any cancellations after this time period will be charged at the full casual OOSH rate.



Absent children notification

It is important to verbally notify the staff if your child will be absent from any session. It is important to make staff aware of absences to avoid raising unnecessary concerns.

Staff must be notified before 2:30 pm on the day that your child is booked in. If you are unable to contact the staff during Centre hours an answering machine will be operating throughout the day.

Drop off and pick up requirements - sign in / out

As part of Child Care Benefit (CCB) regulations and insurance requirements, all children must be signed in when they arrive and signed out when they leave. The person signing must be listed as a person authorised to collect the child. All authorised persons must be over the age of 18 years. Any alternative arrangements must be communicated to the Centre Manager in writing or by phone.

Please remind your child/ren they are never to leave the Centre or school grounds whilst attending OOSH until they have been collected by an authorised person:

Sign in/out Procedure:

The sign in/out sheet is located on the parent desk at the end of the hall adjacent to the centre office.

Morning Session:

- The child is signed in by the parent/authorised person.
- The date, time, full name of the child and parent/guardian's signature are recorded.
- The Parent/authorised person must ensure that an educator is aware of the child's presence.
- An educator will sign out the child to attend school, when School staff are on duty in the playground.

Afternoon Session:

- Kinder children are picked up by an educator and escorted to the centre. - All children are signed in by an educator upon arrival after they are released from school.- The date, time, full name of the child and educators signature are recorded.
- Parent/authorised person sign out their child any time up until 6.15pm, recording the time, name and signature of the parent/authorised person.



You child's first day

The first day at anything can be unsettling and we understand children may have been used to their previous service educator. To assist your child to settle more easily please allow 5-10min with them, engaging in an activity and getting to know the educators and routines.

When it comes to say goodbye your child may become upset – this is quite normal. Please say goodbye, say where you are going and that you will be back for them later and leave quickly. While we know this is may be hard for the parent/guardian also, we have learnt from experience that this is the best way to avoid further distress. Please feel free to ring the centre to find out how your child is settling in. Whilst your child may become upset they will quickly become involved in one of the many activities provided as well as meeting new friends and if your child is not settling down you can rest assured we will contact you.

Late collection of children

Parents are required to sign their child out and leave the centre before the closing time or late fees and late pick up procedures will apply.

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

- Attempt to contact parent/carers.
- If unsuccessful, then emergency contacts from the registration form will be contacted.
- At 6:30pm, if no contact has been made, the staff will contact the Child Protection and Family Crisis Service and the child may be taken to the local police station.

After school care session

All Kindergarten children will be collected from their respective classes by a staff member from the OOSH Centre.

Children from other school years must make their own way to the OOSH Centre. It is important your child is aware that the Centre staff are expecting them to arrive within 5 – 10 minutes after the bell.



FEES

The fees for 2015 are as follows:

Session	Fee per student per session
Morning session	\$16
Afternoon session	\$23
Vacation Care	\$44
Staff Development Days	\$44

Fees must be paid fortnightly in advance. Cancellation and late fees may apply. Casual care attracts a surcharge of 5%. A non-refundable registration fee of \$20 per family will be charged.

Absent children

Children booked into permanent care who are absent from the Centre due to things such as illness or holidays will still be charged for the period they are away.

We also ask that you select your days carefully when booking your child into Vacation Care as we are unable to offer any refunds.

Public holiday fees

If a public holiday falls on the day of a permanent booking that you hold for before or after school care you will be not charged for this day.

Child Care Benefit/ Child Care Rebate

All families must register with their local Family Assistance Office to obtain a Customer Reference Number (CRN), for both yourself and your child/ren, this is a legal requirement. Government subsidy cannot be paid unless your CRN's are provided to our centre.

Centrelink offers a range of financial assistance to help with the cost of child care, these include:

Child Care Benefit (CCB) can help you with the cost of approved and registered child care



Child Care Rebate (CCR) can assist with your out-of-pocket expenses for approved child care if you are working, studying or training. To get Child Care Rebate, you must first make a claim for Child Care Benefit

Jobs, Education and Training (JET) Child Care Fee Assistance can help you with the cost of child care if you want to re-enter the workforce after having a child and are doing activities such as job search, work or study.

For further information regarding CCB/CCR please visit:

<http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/themes/families>

Payment method

Families registered for OOSH care are encouraged to pay using direct debit. Fees paid by direct debit are fortnightly payments debited from a nominated account. Strict regulations are kept to ensure that this information is confidential.

Please allow 2-3 working days for the money to be taken out of your account.

In the event that a direct debit is dishonoured, it will be deemed the responsibility of the parent/carer to pay any associated bank charges incurred by the centre.

Late payment

If fees are overdue by two weeks, the Centre Manager will be notified.

In circumstances where outstanding payments have not been honoured and a resolution cannot be found, we reserve the right to terminate your child's position at the Centre and the matter will be transferred to a debt collection agency.

Receipts/statements

Receipts/statements are emailed to parents/carers on the day the direct debits are processed. Please let us know if you prefer a mailed copy.



FOOD AND NUTRITION

OOSH meals

Breakfast will be offered to the children in the morning session, and afternoon tea will be offered during the afternoon session. Breakfast, afternoon tea and drinks are included in the Out of School Hours session fees. We aim to provide nutritionally based meals with healthier options available.

Breakfast and afternoon tea are prepared according to the food safety guidelines and served by the staff members and children.

Please make sure the Centre registration form has any allergies or religious dietary restrictions listed and that changes are reported immediately to the Coordinator.

Vacation Care meals

Vacation Care fees include breakfast, morning tea and afternoon tea but children must bring their own lunch. Please ensure the lunch does not include nuts as we are a 'Nut Free Centre'.

Nut Free Centre

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction involving the respiratory tract or several bodily systems at the same time. The reaction can be life threatening. We ask that families do not send their children to the Centre with any peanuts or peanut products in order to protect those children who are affected by nut allergies. Common examples of products containing nuts are Peanut Butter, Nutella and Muesli Bars.



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

We have a number of important policies and procedures; please find them listed below in alphabetical order:

Activities

Play and social interactions are an integral part of our sessions and activities are planned and reviewed with the children. The children will have access to a wide variety of safe, stimulating play opportunities such as arts, crafts, sports, games, music, drama, as well as quiet play, homework area and time to talk with staff and friends. We welcome you at any time to use our suggestion box to give your ideas and comments on our programs and activities.

Be aware that 'messy activities' are a part of our program. We supply aprons/paint shirts for the children and every effort is made to ensure that their school uniform is kept clean, however this cannot be guaranteed. Children are therefore permitted to bring a change of clothes to OOSH if they would like to change.

Behaviour

Learning Links OOSH centres adopt a 'Hands Off' Policy and physical aggression towards another person will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Should an incident occur, a Behaviour Incident Report will be completed and the incident discussed with the child's parent/carer.

Should unacceptable behaviour continue and the Centre procedure is not effective, staff will inform the General Manager of Learning Links. When necessary, and as a last resort, exclusion from the Centre may occur. Families will be given the opportunity to discuss their child's behaviour with the OOSH Coordinator and the General Manager, and clear procedures will be established for accepting the child back into the Centre.

To achieve and maintain a positive environment within the Centre, all the staff, children and visitors are asked to respect the following behavioural expectations:

- To stay in the area of OOSH and its boundaries;
- To wear our hats and shoes when outside;
- To listen to each other;
- To clean up after ourselves;
- To look after our toys, games and equipment;



- To be respectful;
- To leave native plants and natural things alone;
- To tell an adult if going for a drink or to the toilet;
- To walk, not run, inside;
- To sit down outside when eating or drinking;
- To be included and to include others in our play;
- To be treated as an individual.

Anti Bullying

Learning Links Out of School Hours program at McCallum's Hill will prioritise the implementation of strategies and activities to ensure that the program provides all participating students with a safe and supportive environment inclusive of an anti-bullying framework. The Anti-bullying plan will be facilitated in close collaboration with McCallum's Hill Public School and will support all students and their families within a clear and consistently communicated framework. It will reflect the Department of Education and Communities' "Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying Policy". At all times the Anti-bullying policy will aim to ensure that the self-esteem and well-being of all students is monitored and encouraged through a range of social-emotional supports. In accordance with the practices and activities implemented by the school, the Out of School Hours program will identify shared responsibilities for preventing and responding to bullying behavior and will enable students to respond appropriately to any early signs of bullying and/or harassment.

Communication

At our Centre we have a number of ways that we keep you up-to-date and exchange information about our program and activities.

On our notice board you will find the weekly program as well as information about our OOSH events, the OOSH program, and other relevant child care information.

Our newsletter is distributed via email once a term. Printed copies are also available from the Centre Coordinator.



Please feel free to discuss any issues relating to your child when at the Centre. The Manager is available to answer any queries, just be mindful that at certain times of the day the Centre is busy and it may be more convenient to make an appointment to discuss an issue.

If there are any changes to your details, please ensure this is provided to the OOSH Manager in writing. It is important that we have the most up-to-date information at any time.

Excursions

Excursions, incursions and additional activities for OOSH sessions will be optional and are not included in the fees. These will require up-front payment.

Illness and serious injury

Every effort will be made to care for your child if they feel unwell whilst at the Centre. Should their temperature exceed the normal reading of 36.5 degrees to 37.0 degrees C, you will be contacted in order for your child to be collected immediately.

Children suffering from an infectious disease will not be allowed to attend the Centre until the child is fully recovered and a Doctor's Certificate is provided. Families will be notified if an outbreak of an infectious disease does occur at the Centre. Children who are not immunised will not be able to attend to Centre during the illness period.

At the time of enrolment parents/carers will be asked to identify if their child has a medical condition, including the diagnosis of asthma, anaphylaxis or diabetes. If your child has a medical condition we require you to work with the Centre to develop a risk minimisation plan, communication plan and an emergency treatment plan (to be developed by a medical professional).

On the Registration Form you complete for enrolment, you must provide authorisation to allow a Centre supervisor to seek medical attention if required.



Medication

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

- A doctor's or medical practitioner's written authorisation, i.e. Doctor's Certificate;
- A prescription label on the medication detailing the doctor's name, child's name, dosage and date.

If medication is required by your child it must be personally handed to the OOSH Manager by the parent/carer. You will be required to complete and date Medication Form, with details of the child's name, date, medication, dosage, the time the medication is to be administered and allowing staff to administer medication.

When medication is being administered, two staff members will be present. Both are required to sign the medication form and return the medication to the appropriate place. No medication will be given to the child to take home. It is the responsibility of the person collecting the child to ask for the medication or collect it from the appropriate place.

In the case of an injury, staff who hold current First Aid Certificates will assess the situation and, if minor, treat the injury. If in doubt staff will contact the family immediately and call the doctor/ambulance. Details of all injuries will be recorded on an Incident Form for the parent/guardian to read and sign.

No hat, no play policy

Please be aware we have a 'NO HAT, NO PLAY' policy that is enforced for children playing outside who do not bring a hat. Children are required to bring their own sunscreen. Please encourage your child to remember to reapply throughout the session, particularly during long Vacation Care days.

Personal possessions

Please label all your children's belongings to assist us in returning lost items to their owner when found. We have a lost property basket where all lost items will be placed. Any unclaimed items left in this basket will be passed onto the school at the end of each term.

Policies and procedures

Any additional policies and procedures not outlined in this handbook can be found in the Centre's Policies and Procedures Manual. This manual is available for you to view at any time so please speak to staff if you wish to access it.



COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

You are encouraged to discuss with the Centre Coordinator or staff any issues regarding your child. Please be assured that any discussion will remain confidential. If you have a complaint or concerns about the Centre please:

1. Talk to the OOSH Manager in person or phone;
2. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, please contact Learning Links on 0431790784 and ask for the General Manager or place your complaint in writing and forward to Learning Links: 10 Railway Parade, Penshurst NSW 2222 different address

Learning Links has a Complaints Policy in place to make sure any complaints are dealt with promptly and appropriately.







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