



SUSSEX NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE Inc.

SCALLYWAGS CHILDREN'S CENTRE CHILD CARE POLICY and PROCEDURES

**Sussex Neighbourhood House is a Registered Limited Hours Type 2 Child
Care Centre.
LICENCE ID 865**

1. AIMS

- ◆ To provide quality short-term child care which is cost effective and accessible to children aged 3 months to 6 years.
- ◆ To provide an environment conducive to the development of a child's independence and self esteem.
- ◆ To facilitate parents' access to education, programs, courses, meetings or workshops.
- ◆ To meet the various occasional child care needs in the community, enabling parents to take time off for the purpose of rest and recreation, education, health care and domestic chores, thus contributing to their effectiveness as parents.
- ◆ To provide a community service to meet the varied needs of families, with special attention to the needs of children of non-English speaking background, low income families, isolated families, single parents and the unemployed to enhance their education opportunities.

2. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

All child care is accountable to and must be consistent with the policies of the Committee of Management of Sussex Neighbourhood House.

Finance will be sought from a variety of sources including Department of Education and Early child Hood Development (Take a Break funding and ACFE Child Care), and Moreland City Council. The remainder will be raised from fees and fund-raising.

3. OPERATION AND PROCEDURES

- Scallywags Children's Centre complies with the Children's Services Act 1996 and the Children's Services Regulations 2009.
- All child care staff and other relevant staff and Responsible Persons should be familiar with procedures and regulations as outlined by Children's Service Centre Regulations 2009.
- The maximum child care available to any child is five hours per day and fifteen hours per week, and Staff will be employed in the ratio required in the Children's Services Centre Regulations.
- An approved 'person in charge' must be present at all times.

- A staff member must be available to relieve/assist child care workers at all times.
- Scallywags Children's Centre may provide child care for babies under the age of 12 months at the House Manager's discretion.
- The House Manager shall ensure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment, immobilisation or any other humiliating or frightening techniques.
- The House Manager shall ensure that no child is taken outside the House by staff without a parent/guardian's written authorisation in relation to date, proposed destination, method of transport, activities and number of staff to accompany and supervise children, except in the case of medical emergency, separately authorised at enrolment.
- Programs based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each of the children cared for at Scallywags Children's Centre will be outlined and displayed for parent information.
- Parents and Guardians are asked to send only fruit, and a drink of fruit juice or milk for snack time and healthy food for lunches of staying for a five hour session. Children's dietary restrictions and allergies will be fully respected.
- Parents should inform workers of any dietary restrictions for their child.

4. CHILD CARE ENROLMENTS

- All children to be cared for at Scallywags Children's Centre must have completed an enrolment form and have it checked prior to the child being admitted to the Centre.
- Enrolment forms will include all relevant details in accordance with the Children's Services Regulations 2009.
- Enrolment forms must have ALL areas details completed.
- Enrolment forms are valid for that calendar year only. A new enrolment form must be completed for each calendar year.

5. CHILD CARE BOOKINGS and CANCELLATION

- Bookings for child care are to be made in advance of attendance.
- Priority places for child care will be given to children of parents attending a program at the house.

PROGRAM PLACES:

- Program bookings have priority over other bookings at the beginning of the year and over all other casual or vacant booking places during the year
- Program bookings must be booked at the time of course enrolment
- Program bookings are ongoing for the duration of the course in which the parent is enrolled.

REGULAR PLACES:

- Regular bookings may be made for the duration of the calendar year.

- Regular bookings will only be available for children staying for the full length of the session (i.e. three (3) hours or five hours depending on the length of the session offered) and therefore attract the full session length fee.
- If a child cannot attend a booked session the centre must be notified in advance.
- Failure to notify of non-attendance at two (2) sessions will result in the cancellation of the regular place.

CASUAL PLACES:

- Casual bookings will be allocated to people on the waiting list and for emergencies at the Manager's discretion
- Casual bookings can be made at short notice if a vacancy occurs for a session.

CANCELLATION

- If a child cannot attend a program, regular or casually booked place the Centre must be notified in advance. It is a courtesy to other parents to give the maximum possible notice. It also enables the House to keep the fees as low as possible.
- Failure to notify also incurs a \$5 fee for non notification
- Failure to notify of non-attendance at two (2) sessions will result in the cancellation of the regular place.

6. SIGNING-IN CHILDREN

The person who delivers the child to Scallywags Children's Centre must sign-in the child in the attendance book.

The following information is required when leaving the child in care:-

1. The child's name.
2. The arrival time.
3. The signature of the person leaving the child.
4. The name of the person collecting the child.
5. An emergency contact phone number.
6. The time the parent/guardian expects to collect the child from Scallywags.

7. SIGNING-OUT CHILDREN

The person that collects the child must sign-out the child in the attendance book. The following information is required when the child is being collected from Scallywags.

1. The actual time that the child was collected from Scallywags.
2. The signature of the person collecting the child or the initials of the staff member that checks the records.
3. Ditto marks and/or "as above" are not sufficient. All areas of information must be completed in full.

8. COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

- Staff are employed to cover the specific length of session offered.

- The staff are not required nor entitled to work any overtime, and therefore parents are requested to collect their children no later than the finishing time of the session.
- Parents who are unavoidably delayed must telephone the staff to notify them of the person they have arranged to collect their child.
- Parents who habitually contravene this policy may be asked to make alternative child care arrangements to meet their needs.
- When alternative arrangements are made for the collection of children, staff need to be made aware. If those people collecting are not the ones authorized on the enrolment form, parents must notify staff prior to leaving the child at Scallywags.
- In the event that staff are not notified by the parent that they will be late, all attempts will be made to contact them or the emergency contact listed on the enrolment form. If this fails the staff member concerned is required to make contact with the House manager or a member of the Committee of Management to discuss further action. This may mean contacting the Dept. of Human Services.

9. FEE AND PAYMENTS POLICY

- All fees will be kept as low as possible to maximize access particularly to disadvantaged families.
- All child care fees are to be paid in advance.
- Regular bookings require payment for the full length of the session.
- Only the House manager has the authority to apply discounts.
- Discounts are available to enable a parent to attend a program at Sussex Neighbourhood House

10. ACCESS

- A child's parent/guardian may enter the House at any time of operation and exchange information about their child with staff. However the needs of other children must be considered if the staff member is on duty.
- The House Manager must ensure that no child attending the House is given into the care of any person other than a parent or guardian of the child except where written permission has been given by the parent/guardian.
- If an unauthorised person attempts to remove a child from the House, staff must endeavor verbally to prevent removal of the child. If in the opinion of staff, further confrontation could put the staff and children's safety at risk, the unauthorised person must be allowed to remove the child from the House. The authorised parent/guardian must be notified as soon as possible and if necessary the police.
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development must be notified as soon as practicable and the incident recorded in the Confidential Incident book held in the office.

11. INFECTIOUS DISEASES POLICY

- Children known to have an infectious disease will be excluded from Scallywags Children's Centre in line with Schedule 5, Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1990, (displayed at the Children's Centre entrance).
- If it becomes apparent that a child is suffering from an infectious disease the parent/guardian will be notified immediately and requested to remove the child from the centre.
- All incidences of illnesses occurring or observed during a session must be recorded in the 'Incident Book', held in the Children's Centre.
- The parent/guardian of each child cared for in the same session as the infected child will be notified of the occurrence of the infectious illness.

12. CHILDREN'S HEALTH, HYGIENE AND NUTRITION

- Children are actively encouraged in personal hygiene and nutritional matters through direction and example.
- Children and staff will wash their hands after using the toilet.
- Children and staff will wash their hands before handling or consuming food.
- Food preparation and eating areas will be cleaned thoroughly before, during and after use.
- All utensils for the preparation and consumption of food and drink will be kept clean.

Sussex Neighbourhood House and Scallywags Children's Centre supports good nutritional practices for children, and encourages and supports the parents in developing healthy eating attitudes in their children. Parents and Guardians are asked to send only fruit, and a drink of fruit juice or milk for snack time.

- For lunch (in 5 hour sessions parents are asked to supply a healthy nutritious meal appropriate for their child. Nutritional guidelines and advice will be made available to all parents at enrolment.
- No nuts or nut products of any kind such as peanut butter or Nutella will be allowed in the Children's Centre.
- Parent/guardians will be asked to avoid foods high in fats, sugar and salt. Children's dietary restrictions and allergies will be fully respected.
- Children and staff will wear hats when going outdoors to play from October to April and other times at the child care worker's discretion.
- Parents must supply sunscreen and a hat for the child to use in the months from October to April and other times that it might be necessary, to be used for that child at the discretion of the child care worker.

13. ACCIDENTS, ILLNESS, EMERGENCIES AND MEDICATION

- Accidents, injuries, illness and infectious diseases should be dealt with as outlined within the Children's Services Centre Regulations.
- The Qualified Child Care Worker shall immediately make a record of the details of any serious accident in the 'Incident Book' and inform the Manager of the occurrence of a serious accident, serious injury or death of a child or of any incident involving an accident or injury or trauma to a child while being cared for by Scallywags Children's Centre requiring the attention of a registered medical practitioner or admission to a hospital. The Manager will

take appropriate steps to deal with the incident informing both the Committee of Management and the Department as appropriate.

- In the event of a medical emergency involving a child, staff may seek medical assistance. An unauthorised person may remove the child from Scallywags Children's Centre without written permission from the parent/guardian, as authority has been given on the Child Care Enrolment Record.
- In the event of any of the abovementioned incidents occurring the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development must be advised as soon as possible.
- At least one child care worker on duty will have appropriate first aid skills.
- Scallywags Children's Centre has a fully equipped first aid kit that is readily accessible and identifiable by the staff but is inaccessible to children.
- The child care worker shall ensure that where medication is required to be administered, the child's parent/guardian has given written permission in the medication book that medications are clearly marked with the child's name and instructions.
- The child care worker must have medication and dosage checked by another child care worker or person in charge or the House manager, before medication is administered
- Only medication prescribed for that child can be administered.
- Information is to be recorded in the medication book as follows:-
 - a) Name of the child
 - b) The request or permission to administer medication
 - c) The name of the medication
 - d) The time and date the medication was last administered
 - e) The time and date or the circumstances under which the medication should be next administered
 - f) The dosage that was administered to the child
 - g) The dosage of the medication to be administered
 - h) The time and date when the medication was administered
 - i) The name and signature of the person who administered the medication
 - j) The name and signature of the person who checked the dosage administered.

14. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

- All children have a right to be safe, and every effort will be made to ensure that the child can feel safe
- No form of bullying is acceptable, and every effort will be made to prevent any incident, protect and support the child.
- If a child's behavior is inappropriate the child will be:-
 - a) Removed from the area of conflict.
 - b) Engaged in or redirected to another activity.
 - c) The child will have their inappropriate behaviour explained to them by the child care worker.
- If a child persists in inappropriate behaviour the child care worker will discuss the matter with the parent/guardian.

- Child care staff will offer support and help in managing the child's behaviour and if required support the parent/guardian in accessing appropriate professional advice.
- A child will never suffer from any physical punishment, restraint or be chastised whilst in care at Scallywags Children's Centre.

15. STAFFING

Scallywags Children's Centre will act in accordance with the Children's Services Regulations 2009 regarding staff numbers, ratios and police checks for staff.

16. CHILD PROTECTION PROTOCOL

- The House, Scallywags Children's Centre and its staff have an important role to play in the protection of children through identification, referral and management of suspected incidents of child maltreatment.
- There is an obligation on the part of the child care staff to ensure action is taken on behalf of the child as soon as concern is felt for his or her well being.
- It is not necessary for the reporter to be able to prove abuse. Persons making a report to the Department of Human Services Victoria do not necessarily need to identify themselves and are protected by the legislation of the Children and Young Persons Act from litigation (suit) if they believe on reasonable grounds that the child is in need of protection.
- As soon as an initial concern is raised about a child in terms of possible maltreatment the staff member has a responsibility to ensure constructive action is taken.
- Steps a child care staff member will take in the handling of incidents where abuse or neglect is suspected:
 - a) Discretion must be observed on the part of every staff member involved to preserve the privacy of the family.
 - b) Where a staff member observes the repeated occurrence of an indicator of abuse, or the occurrence of several indicators together, such indicators should alert those concerned to the possibility of maltreatment.
 - c) The staff member will immediately discuss any concerns with the House manager.
 - d) If the House manager deems it necessary to record information, confidential records kept by the House manager referring to an incident or a child at the Centre, must be factual and objective and without conjecture or subjective judgment.
 - e) Confidentiality of information will apply not only to the immediate incident but is to be maintained perpetually by staff involved, unless the welfare of the child is again, in the future, considered to be of account.
 - f) No staff member below the level of House manager is to discuss, informally, a child maltreatment concern with any other person other than the House manager
 - g) If deemed necessary in the opinion of the House manager, a meeting of relevant staff shall be called at the end of the day, to maintain confidentiality and inform staff of the issue.

- h) The House manager shall inform any other relevant staff of the issue as soon as practical.
- i) The House manager shall inform relevant staff of the action that will be taken.
- j) It may be necessary for the House manager to arrange discussion about the child's situation with another professional, colleague Department of Human Services Victoria or a Head of Service to whom the child or child's family is known, prior to a decision being made regarding action to be undertaken.
- k) With the benefit of additional information available through this process and taking into account the unique situation of each child and his/her family, a decision on the most appropriate course of action will be made.
- l) This will include whether notification is to be made Department of Human Services Victoria, as well as who will make the notification.
- m) If deemed appropriate, the House manager shall contact the Child Protection Unit at Heidelberg 9457 9111 (after hours 9854 5511 or 131 278 Child protection Crisis Line) ask to speak to the Duty Worker and explain the concern.
- n) All aspects of Child Protection initiated case management, including case conferences and management of pre and post Court child placements will remain the jurisdiction of Department of Human Services Victoria. The Department may require continued involvement of the House manager with the case management.
- o) The legislation protects absolutely, the anonymity of the notifier. However, as a general principle families should be made aware of the staff's concerns and the process that may follow. Thus there will be times when it is in the best interests of the child and the trust that has been developed between the family and staff that the House manager informs the family that notification will occur.
- p) However, where informing the family may conflict with the best interests of the child, contact with the family is not permitted. This is particularly relevant in cases of sexual abuse and severe physical abuse.

17. COMPLAINTS

The following procedures for handling concerns, grievances and issues aim to:

- Promote open communication and discussion about all matters
- Provide basic guidelines for a systematic approach to resolving a range of matters.

ProceduresDURES:

1. If a matter relates to another person, discuss the matter with that person first. If agreement is not reached and you wish to pursue the matter further, inform the person that you will take it further.
2. Discuss the matter with the House manager. If agreement is not reached but you wish to take the matter further, inform the manager that you will take it further.
3. In cases where the issue involves taking further action, or where the issue has not been able to be resolved by discussing it with the person involved

or with the manager, inform the Committee of Management in writing. The letter is to be addressed to the Chairperson, Sussex Neighbourhood House, 235-237 Sussex Street, Coburg North 3058, marking the envelope confidential. You may also speak to the Chairperson personally.

4. In the circumstances where the issues are still unresolved by the above measures or you wish for any reason to take the matter further, contact the Children's Services advisor, Department of Education and Early childhood Development 145 Smith Street, Fitzroy, Phone 9412 5333.

If a complaint is made to the House manager that alleges that the health, safety or well being of any child within the children's service may have been compromised or there may have been a contravention of the Act or the Regulations, the manager will contact The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development within 48 hours.

Other Related Policies

- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Asthma Policy
- Sunsmart Policy