



Parent Handbook

Cire OSHC Yarra Junction

2017



Cire Outside School Hours Care Yarra Junction
41 Little Yarra Road, Yarra Junction, 3797

Bookings:

Cire Children's Services Yarra Junction
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Management Structure

Operator/Licensee: Cire Services Incorporated.

Chief Executive Officer: Augusta (Gus) Seremetis

Manager Family and Children's Services: Alison Forbes

Director Cire Children's Services: Lysa Smart

Outside School Hours Care Co-Ordinators: Ashleigh Borthwick

About Cire Children's Services

Cire Outside School Hours Care aims to support families through providing educational and fun activities for children both before and after school hours. The service operates from the 'Church', and provides Before and After School Care to primary aged children from prep to up to 12 years of age who attend a variety of local Primary Schools in the Upper Yarra. Our service runs a courtesy bus from the program to each school in the morning and from the school to the program in the afternoon. This bus is driven by a qualified bus driver who is an employee of Cire Services Inc. and there is a minimum of one educator on the bus also at all times.

The Before School Care Program commences at 6:30am each school morning. Children are served breakfast and take part in a range of activities prior to school commencement at 9am.

The After School Care Program operates from 3.30pm to 6:30pm each school day. Staff provide the children with a healthy fruit snack and a range of recreational/and art activities specifically designed to meet the individual needs of each child, as well as the group.

Philosophy

We believe all children and Educators are on a journey of discovery and that learning never ends.

We recognise that a child's learning and development is enhanced by a partnership between early childhood Educators and family.

We believe that each child and family should be respected for their individuality and personal beliefs. We will respect the rights of each child, family, culture and community. We believe that children are capable, competent, co-contributors to their own learning and intentional teaching techniques through open ended play, forms an integral tool to enhance children's learning and development.

Mission Statement

We will strive to create a sense of belonging by developing strong adult-child interactions and interventions through warm and affectionate relationships.

We will provide a natural environment that is safe and secure, where children can play, develop and wonder at their world. We believe learning and development is dependent on the outdoor world, because this is where life occurs.

We will offer programs where children are respected and valued for their individuality. We will guide and support children in their freedom of choice and in their expression of ideas.

We will aim to provide a service that encourages and strengthens ongoing partnerships with families.

We will provoke critical reflection leading to cultural understandings and quality improvement practices using current teaching techniques and professional tools.

Goals/Objectives

To provide children with facilities, programs and resources which respect and value their individuality, their right of freedom of choice and expression of ideas.

To develop and promote the concept of open-ended/child initiated play within the service, the early learning industry and also within the broader community.

To develop and promote systems within the service which support the concept of building “partnerships with parents”

To develop and promote professional development opportunities that addresses both individual training needs and actively support and enhance the general health and well-being of Educators

To develop opportunities to promote the growth of community based services within the region

To actively participate and contribute to the provision of quality services to families.

Forming Partnerships

Cire Services Inc. is not for profit organisation. Cire Children’s Services Educators ensure safety of environment, quality of service and the delivery of high quality services. We encourage all families to share their ideas and to provide feedback; this assists us to inform our services and ensures that the aims and objectives of the service are being met.

The staff will always keep you informed about your child’s time at the OSHC Program, and will seek direction from you as to the most appropriate form of care for your child. Sometimes things happen at home that can affect how children are feeling and behaving. Part of this team approach is that you keep the staff informed as best you can so that they can know, understand and are able to respond appropriately

We also actively seek your input in a range of operational issues including all our policies and procedures, how the program meets your family needs and areas of our service delivery which you feel could be improved in any way. Your feedback is sought in a number of ways including our suggestion box; mid-year and end of year service evaluations; our philosophy and policy and procedures review; making suggestions to the Cire Inc. committee, as well as through everyday conversations and discussions with staff.

We also encourage families to be involved in their child’s program/service through social events which are presented at different times throughout the year.

To ensure we are able to keep parents up to date on what is happening in and around their service we have initiated a communication system which includes this Handbook; our OSHC newsletters and notices at our venue.

Closure Dates

Cire OSHC Yarra Junction is closed:

- All recognised public holidays
- Extreme bush fire rating days along with mandatory Code Red days. Please see Bush Fire situation.

Christmas Closure Period

The service will also be closed to families for a two week period. Please see the Co-ordinator for further information.

Our Policies and Procedures

To ensure you are adequately informed as to how the service operates, a copy of all our policies and procedures are available at the venue. We urge you to take the time to read these documents. We also actively encourage you to have input in the formation and annual review of all our policies so that we can ensure they remain responsive to the needs of the community and the families who use the service.

Emergency Procedures

Fire/emergency involving building or grounds

In the event of a fire or other emergency occurring within the centre or its grounds, children and Educators will be evacuated by an emergency warden out of the building via the safest route.

Evacuation procedures are displayed throughout the room. Families, staff, students, volunteers and visitors are required to follow the directions of our emergency wardens in any evacuation procedure. Evacuation procedures are practiced on a regular basis, please see staff if you require further information.

Bush Fire situation

Our service is on the Bush Fire at Risk Register, and as such it is important for us to have strategic plans in place to respond, should a bushfire situation occur in the community. The centre will not be open on days rated Code Red or Extreme as per our service policy.

Should a bushfire situation erupt in the immediate district during operating hours, children may be evacuated. Please see our Emergency Management Bushfire Policy.

Although we fully understand your need to contact your child's program during any local emergency, we urge you to assist by leaving phone lines clear for communication between staff and the emergency services.

Should a serious bushfire situation erupt out of hours the Cire management reserves the right not to re-open the program until advised by the Department of Education and Training that it is safe to do so. The services management team will make every effort to advise parents of any program closure.

Cire Children's Services Yarra Junction Licencing Arrangements

The maximum number of children who may be cared for or educated at any one time at Cire OSHC Yarra Junction is 45. Bookings are essential to confirm your place.

Promoting Excellence in Children's Services

In line with the Cire Services Inc. Philosophy, Yarra Junction is also a training venue for future early childhood professionals. The Cire Training department delivers a range of Nationally Accredited Courses in Children's Services and as such our services often support students undertaking their work placement component.

Our Educators

As part of our commitment to a quality service we employ highly committed, qualified early childhood professionals. All Educators are selected not only for their qualifications, skills and experience, but also for their personal approach and philosophy towards the care of children.

Our Educators hold either a Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care qualification or a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. All Educators are also required to hold a current

First Aid qualification, Food Handlers Certificate, Working with Children's Check and a National Police Check as part of their employment conditions.

Children's Services Legislation

The service is licenced to deliver services under the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (National Law) and must meet all conditions as prescribed in the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

National Quality Standard

The National Quality Standard (NQS) is a national quality assurance program focused on ensuring continued quality improvement in children's services. Administered by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority it is directly linked to the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF).

Cire OSHC Yarra Junction has a strong reputation for providing services that exceed these quality standards. This is evident as we achieved the highest standard possible against each principle in our last assessment.

Information about the National Quality Framework and how parents can be involved is available at each program venue. Please speak with Educators for more information.

Your Child's Routine

Our Educators are aware of the importance of a regular routine for children, and the security this provides. Therefore all our services allow children time to meet new people, join in educational activities, develop new skills, and enjoy quiet moments. By providing a routine, children are able to anticipate their day.

Developmental Observations

Each fortnight our early education and care Educators create a developmental program that meets the needs of specific individual children as well as the group. Using written observation records maintained by Educators and recorded during the children's play, a fortnightly/term break developmental program is designed and implemented to meet the individual needs of each child. Each plan will reflect the cultural diversity of the community, and incorporate the views of parents, guardians and the children themselves.

You have direct access to your child's observations and we actively encourage you to have direct input in the information gathered by Educators and used in developing a program which meets your child's individual needs.

The current developmental program/daily activity plan is displayed in each individual playroom and or program venue. Educators are only too pleased to discuss the program with you as we value the partnership between parent and Educators as being central to your child's ongoing development.

The importance of sharing information with each other in terms of your child's day in care is again a priority and is usually carried out in an informal manner at the beginning or end of the day. However, should you require a more formal, private discussion, this can certainly be arranged.

We strive to create an atmosphere and understanding amongst the children where self-value, dignity and respect are paramount. Building on children's self-value is an intrinsic component of each program. Children of all ages are encouraged to develop skills that assist in forming relationships with other children in a positive and productive manner.

Termly Newsletter

Our termly newsletter provides families with important early childhood information regarding special events occurring within the Cire Children's Services department. We encourage you to read through the newsletter and contribute items of interest to this publication.

Noticeboard

An information Notice Board is also located at each of our venues. This is used for posting notices and articles that may be of interest to parents. Please check the board regularly to keep up to date with what is happening.

High Risk Food Groups

Parents are asked not to bring food items that cause a hazard to children or are recognized as high-risk allergy foods. These include, nuts or nut based products (i.e. peanut butter), eggs and popcorn.

The risk of anaphylactic shock can be life threatening, and in some cases a child's allergy may be undiscovered. We therefore ask that parents respect our efforts to safeguard the safety of all children in our care.

Sun Protection

All Cire Children's programs follow the principles of "Sun Smart" facilities and provide a supply of 50+ Broad Spectrum Sunscreen for all children and Educators to use. However, should your child suffer from a particular allergy to sunscreen or you prefer to supply your own, please ensure you detail this on your child's enrolment form and advise Educators.

All children will require a suitable sun hat (compulsory when UV is over 3), which protects the ears and neck area.

Excursions/Incursions

From time to time excursions or incursions are organized within the Vacation Care program and these may involve travel by bus. As per our Regulations notice will be given to all families and written permission and a risk assessment will always be sought prior to excursions taking place.

Priority of Access Guidelines

Enrolments will be taken in line with the Government's Priority of Access Guidelines. More information about these guidelines is available in the centre policy or on the following website: <https://www.education.gov.au/priority-allocating-places> If you have any further questions please feel free to speak to the centre Director or Assistant Director.

Permanent/Regular Bookings

This means that the position is held for you each week, you don't need to call. As the core Educators are employed on a permanent basis rather than casual on-call or casual their employment and subsequently our Educators costs are not linked to actual attendances on the day. Therefore fees (less any CCB) are charged for all permanent/regular bookings even if you do not arrive for reasons such as sickness, annual leave, or a sudden change in work arrangements, (irrespective of whether you have given us prior notice or not).

It is important that you are aware that the Commonwealth Government Child Care Benefit policy limits the number of absent days against which Child Care Benefit can be applied as a discount to fees, to a maximum of 42 per financial year. This means that should you exceed 42 absent days per year, any additional days will be charged at full fee (no child care benefit discount can be applied).

Please ensure you check with the Service Director if you are concerned that you may be close to your absentee limit.

Additional Care

Should you hold a permanent or regular booking at the OSHC and need additional care over and above your normal booking as a once off or for a short period of time, you must organise this through the Service Co-ordinator. Additional care hours can only be provided if a vacancy exists at the time.

Payment of Fees

Please refer to the Fees Policy and Kindergarten Fees Policy.

Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate

As a registered Children's Service families are able to have their fees reduced by accessing Commonwealth Child Care Benefit. Child Care Benefit is available to all eligible parents and the application is based on the family's gross income. Consequently, the level of discount will vary from family to family. Child Care Rebate is available to all families who meet the work, study, volunteer requirements of the Family Assistance Office.

Families have a choice between having their fees reduced each week, or paying full fee and receiving a bulk payment at the end of the financial year.

Registration with the Family Assistance Office (FAO) is compulsory irrespective of whether or not you wish to access Child Care Benefit to reduce your fees.

When your Child Care Benefit eligibility is assessed by the FAO the percentage quoted on the assessment letter is then used by the service to calculate the actual fee payable by you. The formula used in this process is set by the FAO and families are urged to discuss this with the service to avoid any confusion or misinterpretation of out of pocket costs e.g. 100% CCB eligibility does not mean that the entire fee is covered by child care benefit.

As with any government allowance or family payment, families are held accountable in relation to their Child Care Benefit and need to make sure that they have completed all the required documentation both at the time of the application and in terms of their continued eligibility whilst their child is in care.

The service can take no responsibility for costs incurred by parents due to the cancellation or expiration of Child Care Benefit eligibility.

Change of enrolment details

Please remember to notify the program of any change in details pertaining to your child's enrolment e.g. change of address, contact details, allergies or illness. It is vital that the program Educators are able to contact you quickly should the need arise. Care will be immediately withdrawn for any child whose enrolment details have been shown to be out of date and will not be resumed until such time as a new enrolment form is lodged with the service.

What if you're running late to collect your child from the Service?

Cire OSHC Yarra Junction is licensed to operate between the hours of 6.30am to 9am and 3.30pm to 6.30pm.

If you have not arrived to collect your child at 6.30pm and have not made contact with the service we will endeavor to contact you using information recorded on your child's enrolment form. If

unsuccessful we will then contact the family's nominated authorised contacts and ask them to collect your child on your behalf.

If this is unsuccessful, staff will continue to remain at the service until 7.00pm again endeavoring to contact either you or your emergency contact person, and will advise the Manager Family and Children's Services of the situation. If at 7.15pm no progress has been made, staff will contact the Victorian Police on 000 and follow their advice.

Late Fee

A late fee of \$5.00 per every 5 minutes or part thereof, after 6:30pm will be charged to cover the cost of overtime for staff. Please note that Child Care Benefit (CCB) is not applied to a late fee.

If a late fee is charged more than 3 times a year, any further occurrences will be charged at \$5.00 per minute.

Children with additional needs

The program endeavors to support the needs of each family in the community, and recognises the specific considerations necessary when including a child with additional needs into programs.

We are committed to working with you in linking into resources and support networks. Should the need rise for additional resources beyond which the program is able to provide, we will then consult with the parent and other agencies/networks to determine the best steps to take.

Illness, Injury and Medications

Should your child become unwell at the program, our Educators are fully trained and experienced in dealing with illness in the appropriate manner. You will be contacted immediately to discuss the situation and you may be asked to collect your child from care. Unfortunately programs simply do not have the facilities or the Educators to care for sick children long term and also maintain the level of care required to other children in the group. Therefore if we are unable to contact you, your emergency contact person will be notified.

If it is decided that your child requires urgent medical attention, then under the direction of the Manager Family and Children's Services or the early education and care educator on duty, an Ambulance will be called. In such a case every effort will be made to ensure that an educator is able to accompany your child to the hospital until you arrive.

Please do not send your child to the program if:

- You are aware or suspect that he/she may be unwell or has or has had:
- A fever of more than 38 degrees within the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea (until he or she has been free of symptoms for a full 24 hours)
- Vomiting (until he or she has been free of symptoms for a full 24 hours)
- Conjunctivitis (until their eyes are free of discharge or irritation)
- Hand Food and Mouth Disease (until the blisters are healed and the fever subsided for a full 24 hours)
- Head Lice (until your child's hair has been treated **and all eggs, including dead ones**, have been removed.
- Persistent coughing and/or excess nasal mucous e.g. green nose (until the mucous subsides or a doctor's certificate confirms that the child's symptoms are not contagious.

Under no circumstances can an Educators transport a child to medical help.

To assist us in preventing illness and infections from being transferred to other children and Educators, should your child be absent due to illness, please contact us before bringing him/her back to the Centre. In some circumstances Health Regulations require a health certificate to be received. Please notify the Centre immediately if any infectious condition is diagnosed, so other users of the service can be notified.

Any child who requires medical treatment including Asthma medication or pain relief (e.g. Panadol) within a four (4) hour period, or is suffering from, or in the previous 24 hours has suffered from a high temperature, loose bowel motions or vomiting will be excluded from care.

Should a child display signs or symptoms of illness whilst in care, and Educators arrange for them to be collected, program policy stipulates that they will be excluded from care for a **full operational day**, unless the child's parent/guardian provides the service with a Doctor's Certificate stating that they are fit to return earlier.

Infectious Diseases

For the health and well-being of all children and Educators attending the Cire OSHC program, it is vital that we make every effort to protect against the spread of infectious diseases. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Services has supplied us with an "Exclusion Table" to guide Educators when assessing confirmed cases of infectious diseases.

If your child is confirmed to have an infectious disease please make sure you:

- Advise the program immediately, even if your child is still absent. The respective program will then place a notice on the entrance door of the service to advise you of the outbreak of an infectious disease in the community, the signs and symptoms, and the number of cases confirmed at the program (no names will be disclosed).
- Contact the Program Co-ordinator before your child returns to care.

Accidents and Injuries

If your child has an accident or is injured whilst at the program, they will be attended to using common First Aid practices, all details will be recorded in the Accident and Injury Register. Government regulations require you to read and sign this document prior to leaving the program.

Should the injury cause concern, or require medical attention every effort will be made to contact you. However if you are unable to be contacted, Educators will immediately contact your emergency contact person and/or an ambulance depending on the severity of the injury. In terms of the Cire Children's Centre, State Children's Service Regulations require the Centre to notify the Department of Education and Early Childhood Children's Services of any injury to a child that requires medical intervention.

Medications

Educator's protocols are subject to strict government regulations in relation to the administering of medication to any child. It is important that you understand these requirements so that proper care can be given to your child during the day.

Should your child require medication throughout the day, either prescription or over the counter, herbal or homeopathic, oral types or in the form of a cream or lotion, please ensure that you:

- Complete all the relevant columns in the Medication Register
- Hand the medication to an educator for safe storage.

Prescription, chemist, herbal or homeopathic medication must be stored in its original container and be clearly identified as belonging to the relevant child. A handwritten label on a prescribed medication is not sufficient. The label must be clearly identified as having been issued by the prescribing doctor/therapist and show clearly the name of the child for which the medication was prescribed, the name of the medication and dosage.

In the case of creams purchased “over the counter” parents are required to clearly label the item with their child’s name and complete the medication register. Educators will then administer the medication according to program’s policies and procedures.

Educators are unable to administer medication for which details have not been fully completed unless it is considered to be of an urgent nature e.g. Asthma treatment or Insulin. In this situation Educators will contact the child’s parents/guardian to seek verbal authorization. The parent/guardian’s signature is then required when the child is collected from care.

Medications of a non-urgent nature e.g. antibiotics, will not be administered without correct authorization, however Educators will notify the parent as soon as possible as to their inability to administer the medication.

PLEASE REMEMBER: NEVER LEAVE MEDICATIONS OF ANY TYPE IN YOUR CHILD’S BAG

Asthma/ Action Plan

If your child has an asthmatic condition, we need to know as much as possible about his/her condition to ensure that the appropriate action is taken when necessary. Therefore parents are asked to:

- Complete an “Asthma Action Plan” and attach it to your child’s enrolment form. A copy of this plan will be displayed in the service venue.
- Supply the Service with a supply of medication and the relevant applicator to enable Educators to respond effectively to your child’s medical needs.

Please ensure that you are familiar with the service’s procedure in the case of a child becoming ill. Although Educators are trained in emergency Asthma Management, Educators will always follow our standard procedure in relation to contacting parents and/or an ambulance.

Allergy and/or Anaphylaxis

If your child has an allergy it is very important that you let us know. In some cases an allergy may also result in a life-threatening situation, and we must have this information at hand.

If your child has a very mild reaction then parents are required to complete a Medical Condition Minimisation & Communication Plan and a Asthma, Allergy, Intolerance and Food Preference form.

However, if your child’s allergy is more serious and may involve them having to receive some form of medication i.e. anti-histamine, or even an Epi-Pen, then you must have your doctor complete an Anaphylaxis form which is also available at Reception. This enables Educators to respond quickly to your child’s allergy and administer the medication as your doctor prescribes. The law states that we

cannot have a child in care that has an allergy which requires medication response, without this form being completed and medication provided.

In the case where medication and/or an EpiPen is required it is preferred that this medication remains at the Centre to reduce the risk of it being forgotten when a child is brought into care.

Please read our Anaphylaxis Policy for more details. Your input in the review of this policy is also important to us.

Hand washing

As part of our overall strategy to control the spread of infection within our programs, we ask that you, together with your child, wash your hands on arrival at the Children's Centre and prior to completing the sign-in process. In-fact research has shown that this simple procedure alone can reduce the spread of infection in a service by up to 60% but your support in this is vital.

Immunisation

Under the 'No Jab, No Play' law, which came into effect on 1st January 2016, any new children enrolled at CIRE Children's Services are required to be fully immunised as per the immunisation schedule. Prior to starting at the service parents/carers must provide an immunisation status certificate that shows their child is:

- up to date with vaccinations for their age OR
- on a vaccine catch-up schedule OR
- has a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated.

An immunisation status certificate is a statement showing the vaccines a child has received. The most common type of immunisation status certificate is an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR). These Statements can be requested at any time by contacting Medicare via the following:

- phone 1800 653 809
- email acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au
- visit the Medicare website
- visit your local Medicare office.

If your child has missed some or all of their vaccinations please speak to your doctor or immunisation nurse about developing an approved vaccination catch-up schedule so you are able to commence at the service while you are getting your child's immunisation status up to date. Parents/carers who think their child may require a medical exemption to one or more vaccines should consult their GP.

If you require any further information regarding the requirements under this legislation please speak to the Centre Director or contact Rose Thompson, Immunisation Program Officer from Shire Yarra Ranges on 03 9294 6475

The service will provide a range of information for parents relating to the benefits and side effects of Immunisation. Immunisation dates are displayed on our notice boards.

Should confirmed cases of an infectious disease be present at the program, you will be advised by way of a notice placed on the entrance door. Children who are not immunised will not be excluded from care unless the program is directed to do so by the Department of Health e.g. in the case of an

outbreak of measles. Full fees will be payable for any non-immunised child excluded from care either voluntary or under instruction from the Department of Health in response to an outbreak of an infectious disease.

Smoking

For the health and well-being of the children both the buildings and grounds of all Cire Children's Programs are "Smoke Free Zones".

Toys from Home Free Zone

Programs actively discourage children from bringing play items from their home. Educators are not responsible for toys that child has bought from home. Some toys and dress-ups that are considered inappropriate will be placed in the office area until the child is collected by his/her parent/guardian.

Information Technology

Please do not allow children to bring personalized electronic games such as Nintendo, iPod, iPad and Phones as they may encourage inappropriate behavior in a group care setting. Personalized information technology deemed inappropriate will be placed in the office area until the child is collected by his/her parent.

Security Measures (including Signing in and out)

An overall sense of safety and security for your child in care is of the utmost importance, for both your child's welfare and your own peace of mind.

We have designed the following procedure to ensure that your child is safe and secure at the service. Your support in ensuring that our standards are maintained is essential.

On arriving at the Before School Care/Vacation Care Program, please sign your child in and ensure that the staff member is aware of your child's arrival. The signing-in procedure formally transfers the responsibility of care to the program and gives us a record of your child's attendance in the event of an evacuation. On your child's arrival at the After School Care staff will ensure he or she is signed into the program, however on departure, please remember to sign your child out of care. It is important that he/she remains with you at all times to ensure their safety within the building and the car park area.

Custody and Access Issues

It is important that the coordinator is made aware of circumstances pertaining to the custody of your child. Should a non-custodial parent arrive to collect a child and no court order is present on file, Educators are legally obliged to hand over responsibility for the child to the said parent. However, Educators will make every effort to discuss the situation with them and where necessary inform the relevant authorities and the other parent/guardian accordingly.

Procedure for complaints

Occasions may arise where you have concerns regarding the care of your child or program policy. If so, please:

Speak to the Educators directly involved in your child's care, or if you prefer, speak to the Service Coordinators or Manager of Family and Children's Services.

If the issue is still of concern and a resolution has not been reached, the Cire Services Inc. Committee of Management can be contacted via Cire Chief Executive Officer Ms. Gus Seremetis gusseremetis@cire.org.au or by phoning 59 671776. Cire Services is situated in the Main Street in Yarra Junction, just near the traffic lights and opposite the Commonwealth Bank.

Please note in terms of the program, you have the right to contact our Children's Services Officer, Department of Education and Early Childhood Services, Level 3, 295 Springvale Road, Glen Waverley at any time. The telephone number is displayed in our centre's foyer area.

In closing

We consider it a privilege to play a part in your child's life, and we hope that this handbook has answered some of your questions. Please do not hesitate to speak with our Educators who will be only too happy to assist you.

Feedback

Your feedback on this publication and any issues pertaining to CIRE Children's Services is valued and forms an important part of our evaluation process.

Please record your comments and return either to the administration office directly or drop it into our suggestion box in your program venue.