

Partnerships with Families & Community Links

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians have the right to choose the type of care that they consider appropriate for their children. Participation by Parents/Guardians in issues relating to the care of their children is important for several reasons. Parents/guardians are the primary and continuing carers of their children; they have long-term responsibility for their children; their participation enhances staff responsiveness to the needs of their children. Participation by Parents/Guardians in the service's management body which can help ensure that a service is responsive to the needs and desires of Parents/Guardians.

Parents/guardians also need to have physical access to the program area to ensure their confidence in the service provided. A continuing exchange of ideas and information is also enhanced when a Parent/Guardian is able to watch the child's activities in the context of the childcare service.

Rights

- To know that their children are safe and in quality care.
- To visit the service.
- To expect support in their roles as first and foremost educators/carers of their children.
- To be aware of the programs and goals of the service, all of the policies and procedures.
- To be involved in the growth and development of the service.
- To receive regular information from the service.
- To feel free to discuss their child/ren with the Staff and Co-ordinator in a comfortable, confidential setting.
- To participate on the Management Committee.
- To receive information on workshops, functions or the service and any other information which may be of benefit to their family or effect the care of children.
- To express concerns or grievances according to service policy, and have these considered appropriately.
- To be approached by staff, volunteers and others associated with the service in an appropriate and respectful manner.
- To have access to the records kept in relation to their child, copies of

the qualifications of staff and facilities and equipment used in the operation of the scheme.

- To receive information on programs and nutrition implemented by the service and provide feedback where necessary.

Should any of these rights be violated Parents/Guardians are actively encouraged to engage the grievance procedure.

Responsibilities

- To support the service in its endeavours to provide a quality service for their children.
- To be willing to be on committees, so the service may continue to operate.
- To support staff, by assisting where necessary to correct inappropriate behaviour.
- To know and follow procedures in the Parent handbook.
- To understand the grievance procedure and to follow it appropriately.
- To sign children in and out and to make sure no *unauthorised person* is sent to collect a child without first, contacting the Co-ordinator.
- To respect and accept the individuality and uniqueness of each of their children.
- To direct any concerns directly to the Co-ordinator and where necessary the Management Committee.
- To approach all communication with staff, volunteers, other Parents/Guardians and children in an appropriate and respectful manner.

Should any of these responsibilities not be met the following steps will be undertaken:

- The matter will be discussed with the Parent/Guardian by the Amberley O.S.H.C. Committee and the appropriate process outlined. In a vast majority of cases this will be the last action required and the matter will be resolved.
- Should the matter recur, a letter will be sent by the service outlining the issue, the correct process and stating that another recurrence will lead to the cancellation of the booking.
- If the matter occurs a third time a letter should be sent by the service, referring to previous letters and conversations, and notifying of cancellation of the booking.

THE AMBERLEY O.S.H.C. COMMITTEE HAS THE RIGHT TO BYPASS ANY OR ALL OF THE ABOVE STEPS AND REFUSE OR TERMINATE

ANY ENROLMENT THAT THEY DEEM TO HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CENTRE.

i.e.

- Failure to meet financial responsibilities
- Failure to sign and comply with the Amberley O.S.H.C. Parent Consent Statement
- Past history of non compliance within the guidelines of the centre causing a negative impact on the wellbeing of the centre, staff and children.

Community

The service will:

- Participate in industry related activities within its local area (e.g. local network meetings)
- Use local services and facilities wherever possible (e.g. shops, community groups, etc).
- Invite involvement from local service providers, politicians, schools, etc as appropriate.
- Participate in local community events (e.g. fundraisers, community events etc) as appropriate.
- Invite feedback and comment from local stakeholders.
- Allow access to the service by all local stakeholders as appropriate.

Parents/Guardians Feedback and Grievance Mechanisms

Each Parent/Guardian is to be given regular opportunities to contribute to evaluation of services provided to them concerning:

- The relevance and quality of services offered to them;
- Their treatment by staff at Amberley O.S.H.C.
- Their impressions of Amberley O.S.H.C. as an effective service provider;
- Our premises and operating environment;
- Any measures we might take to offer better services to Parents/Guardians.

Management must treat Parents/Guardians responses to evaluation in a serious manner and communicate with Parents/Guardians about any changes made as a result of Parents/Guardians suggestions.

Management and staff must ensure that they do not engage in or encourage or accept any act of unlawful discrimination against a Parent/Guardian or child. Such acts of discrimination will not be tolerated. Management must include training of aspects of unlawful discrimination in induction training sessions for new staff.

All staff must treat any complaint by a Parents/Guardians concerning any unlawful discrimination sympathetically and seriously. Unlawful discrimination includes discrimination on the basis of sex, race or ethnicity, disability, age, religious or political belief.

- Parents/Guardians must also be informed that they have a right to raise any grievances or concerns about our services or treatment of them at any time during their involvement with the service.
- *Grievance Procedures are outlined below. Grievance investigation and resolution procedures shall incorporate natural justice principles.*

Discrimination Complaints

Where a complaint is raised, an individual employee should take a note on the alleged form of discrimination, place, person etc and refer this note with contact details of the person alleging discrimination to the Coordinator who shall then arrange for an investigation into the complaint and take necessary action to resolve the complaint.

Parent's Grievance Procedure

On enrolment, the Parent/Guardian is given written information which encourages them to develop open communication with the carers, also their rights to contact the Coordinator, the centre's Management Committee and the relevant Government agencies if they have any concerns.

All those involved in any grievance procedure will be expected to behave in an appropriate manner which respects the dignity of others.

In order to ensure confidentiality and to respect the dignity of those involved in the process discussions relating to a grievance should not be discussed within hearing of children or Parents/Guardians and staff not directly involved.

- If the Parent/Guardian has any concerns with the Management Committee the Parent/Guardian is asked to address the concern in writing to The Sponsor, Amberley P. & C. Association.
- If the Parent/Guardian has any concerns with the Coordinator the Parent/Guardian is asked to address the concern in writing to the

Management Committee.

- If the Parent/Guardian's concern is with a staff member:
 - the Parent/Guardian is encouraged to raise the matter with the Coordinator. If their concern is not resolved, the Parent/Guardian can contact the management committee.
 - if the Parent/Guardian felt the management committee did not adequately address the concern, the Parent/Guardian can contact, in writing, the sponsor, Amberley P. & C. Association.
 - In the event that the Parents/Guardians are not satisfied with the outcome the Department of Communities may be contacted.