OSHC Parent Handbook
WELCOME: Thank you for your interest in OSHC and we hope to be of service to you.

This is the enrolment pack to get you started. Please fill in all details and return to the front office or to Tracey during hours of operation. Please feel free to ask OSHC staff for more information.

OSHC is a service which provides appropriate recreational activities to Primary School aged children outside College hours, (i.e. before and after school and during school holidays) and can be used for any reason. The overall aim of OSHC is to accommodate the needs of the families, so please feel free to discuss your individual needs with us.

**Co-ordinator:** Tracey Ahrns
**Accounts Officer:** Tracey East
**Phone:** 0437 975 091 (OSHC)  8552 8880 (College)
**Fax:** 8552 8833
**Email:** oshc@encounter.sa.edu.au
**Address:** 64 Adelaide Road, Victor Harbor, SA, 5211

**BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

Parents/Caregivers are required to fill in a booking sheet. These are available in this package, at the front office and OSHC. Permanent bookings will continue each term until notified otherwise.

**VACATION CARE**

Excursion Days will be as programmed and there is no alternate care if your child does not wish to participate in a planned excursion.

Parents/Caregivers are required to fill in a booking sheet that will accompany the Vacation Care Program. A deposit of $10 will be required for all booked excursions/incursions in vacation care.

**CANCELLATIONS**

Cancellations must be made **48 hours in advance** or it will be classed as an allowable absence (all families are entitled to 42 childcare benefit assisted absent days per year.) and parents will only pay the gap. Cancellations can be made by emailing oshc@encounter.sa.edu.au, calling or text messaging 0437 975 091.

Please note that if your child is absent without the 48 hours notice you will be required to sign the booking sheet. This is a Federal Government requirement.

**SIGNING IN AND SIGNING OUT**

Parents or caregivers are required to sign their child/children in to OSHC in the mornings and to sign them out in the afternoon. This is our record of children in attendance and is essential to ensure child safety. **Without this signature you could lose your Childcare Assistance.**

All staff caring for your children during all sessions have First Aid training. A First Aid kit, lists of children with Asthma or other special needs accompany staff on excursions and are confidential but accessible to staff if required.

**POLICIES**

The service’s policies are available for all parents/caregivers to browse over. Most are included in this handbook but they can also be located in the Policies Manual. Please see OSHC staff.

**CHILD PROTECTION**

Children have the right to a safe and nurturing upbringing. All staff working with or close to children are required under the Legislation Act (Mandatory Notification) to notify any indicators, which may relate to child abuse.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE**

In 2011 the Commonwealth Government introduced the National Quality Framework for School Age Care into OSHC. This is known as “My Time, Our Place” and is designed to inspire conversations, improve communication and provide a common language about children’s play, leisure and learning among children themselves, their families, the broader community, school age care educators and other professionals. The National Quality Framework aims to provide school aged children in outside school hours care throughout Australia with high quality care that promotes learning and development with particular emphasis on play, social interactions and recreation. As a service we ask all families to participate in surveys, parent/caregiver nights etc, which will help the service provide a high quality of care for your child/children.

We welcome your feedback at anytime and at times may request specific information from families and children.
CENTRE GOALS - We offer a program of Christian Education and Care which aims to:

Provide a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment
Support families and caregivers in their role as primary care providers
Encourage and value the unique God-given Qualities and talents of our children and families
Develop links with other groups and services in the local community

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT
We believe that middle childhood is an important and valuable stage in the lifelong learning process. We believe that each child is a unique creation of God and a person loved by God. We aim to encourage and support children and families.

CHILDREN
We provide care in a way that:

Protects children from harm
Respects the child’s dignity and privacy
Promotes the child’s wellbeing
Provides positive experiences for the child
The best interests of the children are the paramount concern.

As a community we are guided by core values and we strive to reflect the characteristics of God, especially love, justice, compassion, forgiveness, patience and service. As carers, we see ourselves as guardians of childhood and children’s natural interest and as partners with families and the community.

Each child is important and has individual needs and rights. We believe that children have a right to:

Always feel and be safe, physically and emotionally
Be unique and express their ideas, creativity and feelings naturally and freely
A nurturing, learning environment which fosters and extends their talents and adopts the principles of equal opportunity and social justice
A harmonious and well-balanced program which sees the child as a whole and develops all aspects of the child’s physical, social, emotional, cognitive, creative and language skills.

We aim to encourage:

A sense of self-worth
The formation of stable, caring relationships with staff and other children
The development of independence and personal responsibility
An awareness and understanding of differences in culture, language, gender, age, needs and ability
The development of problem solving, negotiation and self help skills
An awareness and respect for our environment
Students with special needs to be involved in the program

PARENTS/CAREGIVERS AND FAMILIES
We aim to support parents/guardians in their role as primary caregivers and educators by:

Welcoming them into our centre
Encouraging their involvement and participation with the centre
Respecting and accommodating their child-rearing practices
Exchanging information with parents/caregivers about their child
Providing information about other family and children’s services

STAFF / VOLUNTEERS
To ensure provision of quality care, our staff:

Recognise children as individuals and have an understanding of their needs
Provide a stimulating environment through developmentally appropriate programs
Members work as a flexible team member
Will be sensitive to the needs of families and the community, and be able to respond to these needs through open communication

We are committed to providing:

Encouragement for and access to staff development
Opportunities to be involved in decision making
An environment which is supportive of the individual worker, especially in relation to their physical, professional and emotional needs
COMMUNITY
Our service will:
- Promote awareness and knowledge of the need for and value of quality childcare
- Participate with other community groups, agencies and services to share resources and develop a support network
- Endeavour to remain aware or and respond to, where possible, the changing needs within our community
- Be sensitive to the wide range of social and cultural backgrounds of the community it serves

POLICIES
As mentioned earlier, this is a brief overview of relevant policies that we feel you need to be made aware of as a first port of call. A detailed Policies Manual is available for you to read and is kept at the centre. Please see OSHC staff for further information.

CONFIDENTIALITY
We wish to assure all families that any topics discussed between parents/caregivers and staff will remain strictly confidential at all times, regardless of who instigated the discussion. Staff may deem it necessary to share information with each other where warranted but these discussions will never take place in front of children or other people.

ACCESS TO THE SERVICE - POLICY STATEMENT:
“Access to the families and children to the Encounter Lutheran OSHC service will be non-discriminatory. Children’s access to safety and care at the service will be ensured, and the custodial rights of parents to access the service will be protected. Other members of the community, professionals and students will be provided access to the service where they can enhance the program’s quality, the protection of the welfare and rights of children and staff or the provision of training and experience to people in the children’s services field.”

Under the Dept of Communities, guidelines for OSHC programs (Priority of Access) are as follows:

1st Priority – Children of workforce participants where a single parent or both parents are employed, seeking employment or studying/training for future employment
2nd Priority – Those children of parents with a confirming disability or incapacity
3rd Priority – Children at risk of serious abuse or neglect
4th Priority – Parents at home with more than one child and single parents at home.

There will be no discrimination on the basis of religion, sex, disability, race, marital status or income.

We will endeavour to provide care for children as and when required. However, if a place is not immediately available at the service your child/children may be put on a waiting list. If your child is on the waiting list we ask that you contact us weekly to confirm that you wish to remain on the waiting list. If we do not hear from you for two weeks we will assume you do not wish to remain on the waiting list; therefore your name will be removed to enable another family earlier access to care.

Please note: We have been allocated a certain number of childcare places daily and as such we are unable to exceed this number.

OSHC hours of operation are:
- Before School Care: 7.00 am - 8.30 am
- Early Drop-Off: 7.45 am - 8.30 am
- After School Care: 3.15 pm - 5.45 pm
- Vac care/Pupil Free Days: 8.15 am - 5.45 pm

We are approved for 30 Childcare Approved places.
- Before School Care: 30 places
- After school and Vacation Care: 30 places

SUN – SAFETY REQUIREMENTS
In line with the existing Hot Weather Policy of the college, the OSHC Service will observe the following recommendations:
- We will not close during hot weather, recognising that this would be inconvenient for and against the expectation of many parents.
- During periods of extreme heat, learning/recreational activities will be appropriately modified by OSHC staff and students will have the opportunity to remain indoors.
- The college buildings occupied by OSHC are all air conditioned and therefore provide a comfortable environment for all!
When the estimated temperature for Victor Harbor is over 37 degrees, parents may keep their child/children home or pick them up early (please advise OSHC staff and sign your child/children out).

**Sun-safe Policy - No HAT = No Play**

**AIM:** We endeavour to protect your child/children from the sun, but in order to do this we need families to help by:
- Playing an active role in ensuring that children are dressed appropriately and sun block is applied.
- Children are to wear a broad-brimmed hat (no baseball style caps) at all times when outside, including excursions.
- As role models, staff will wear hats and apply sunscreen.
- The service encourages the use of sun-protective clothing and SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen for children and staff.
- PLEASE, NO Singlet tops or dresses are to be worn to OSHC, shoulders need to be covered in short sleeved tops etc.
- Shoes need to have enclosed toes.
- The service makes use of available shade for outdoor activities to reduce time spent in the sun, between 10am and 2pm (applies to Vac. Care)

It is requested that all children have sun block applied before arrival to OSHC. Staff will reapply sunscreen as required. If your child requires their own sunscreen, due to allergy for example, this will be supplied by families with child’s name clearly printed on bottle.

**GRIEVANCES**

OSHC fosters positive and harmonious relationships between all users, staff and management. Solutions are sought to all disputes, issues or concerns that affect the operation of the service in a fair and prompt manner.

**Parent/Caregiver Concerns/Complaints**

If a parent/caregiver has a concern or complaint about the service that they are receiving, then an appointment should be made with the Co-ordinator to discuss the matter confidentially. At no time will discussions take place in the presence of children.

**Parent/Caregiver and Staff Conflict**

The Parent/Caregiver should discuss the problem with the relevant staff member.

If, after discussion with the relevant staff member, the Parent/Caregiver feels action is necessary, they should take the matter up with the Co-ordinator.

If the Parent/Caregiver still feels the problem is not resolved, the Co-ordinator may offer to take the matter to the Management Committee for guidance, or the Parent/Caregiver may write directly to the Management Committee to explain the problem.

The committee/operator will advise the Co-ordinator of its decision and the Co-ordinator will convey that decision to the Parent/Caregiver and staff member concerned. Alternately, the Committee will write directly to the Parent/Caregiver to advise of the decision.

**ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY-Rationale**

**Harassment in any form is unacceptable.** As educators, we have a responsibility to provide learning and leisure environments that are free from harassment, and that encourage students to develop attitudes and skills that discourage, challenge and report harassment in all forms.

OSHC staff will follow up all reports of harassment, of any kind. We will fill in a Bullying Report and record any follow up action. This record will be kept on file and we will inform Parents/Caregivers of all steps taken.

**Definitions**

Harassment can mean:
- A student harasses another student
- An adult harasses a student
- A student harasses an adult
- An adult harasses another adult

**Kinds of harassment include:**

**Physical** – pushing, hitting, punching, jostling, or frightening others by threatening these actions against them.

Hiding, damaging or destroying the property of others.

**Non-physical** – repeated ‘put-downs’ name calling, threatening, ridiculing, abusive language, threatening gestures or notes, extortion (demanding money, food for example) and exclusion, racist comments, offensive sexual references.
Aims
To provide a fair and supportive Christian environment free from all forms of harassment which promotes personal respect as well as providing physical and emotional safety for all.

Responsibilities

Of OSHC staff
To document incidents
To model appropriate behaviours at all times
To deal with all reported incidents of bullying quickly and efficiently
To ensure there is adequate supervision
To report incidences of bullying to the Principal if this is warranted
To ensure that communication is ongoing

Of Children
To ‘tell’ if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied
To help someone who is being bullied
To not bully others
To encourage others to act positively

Of Parents/Caregivers
To watch for signs that their child/children may be being bullied
To speak to the Co-ordinator or other OSHC staff if their child/children are being bullied, or they suspect that their child/children are being bullied
To encourage their children to ‘tell’ the Co-ordinator or other OSHC staff if they are bullied
To respect and support the policy
To model appropriate behaviour while on college property
To ensure that communication is ongoing (if bullying persists)
To support and encourage their child/children to act positively
To respect and the support the OSHC service and the college

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Encounter Lutheran College is committed to the following objectives:
Ensuring that students, children, employees, volunteers, contractors and other visitors are safe from injury while on college premises or involved in college activities.
In line with this policy, the OSHC service will support these objectives at all times of operation.
The centre will have access to a First Aid Kit and manual in a secure place accessible to staff and not children
All staff will have a current recognised First Aid Certificate
Staff will wear gloves when administering first aid and when making contact with body fluids

In the event of an accident, staff will assess the situation and proceed as follows:
In the event of a minor accident- administer first aid as required and notify parents of treatment administered by centre staff at time of collection. If deemed necessary, parents/caregivers will be contacted and treatment given in consultation with them.
In the event of a serious injury- first aid will commence immediately while contact with a local practitioner/ambulance is being made. Staff will then ring parents/caregivers on the emergency number immediately.

IMPORTANT
Any accident sustained by children in the service is recorded on the accident forms, dated and signed by a staff member. This form is sighted and signed by a parent/caregiver on arrival.

MEDICATION
Medication can only be given to children if:
The medication is a prescribed oral medication
It is accompanied by a letter from a medical practitioner stating:
the time it is to be administered
the name of the medication
It is in its original package with a pharmacist’s label which clearly states the child’s name, dosage to be given, frequency of administration, date of dispensing and expiry date; and it is accompanied by a letter of authority from the parent/caregiver.
Parents/Caregivers will be asked to fill out the service’s medication form.
SICK CHILDREN
If your child/children become ill while attending OSHC, the staff will make them as comfortable as possible until they are picked up. If staff warrants that your child/children are serious enough to be sent home, a phone call will be made to parents/caregivers. Emergency contacts will be notified if parents/caregivers are not contactable.

In accordance with Children’s Services Regulations:
“A child suspected of having an infectious illness shall not be accepted at the service. A child shall not be admitted following an infectious illness unless a Doctor’s certificate or clearance is given or until the required time of isolation has elapsed.”
A list of contagious diseases and their exclusion periods are available from the Co-ordinator.

HYGIENE AND SAFETY
All facilities and equipment will be checked prior to use by the service for items, which may cause injury. This will include public parks, hired buses and excursion venues.
Facilities and equipment, which are assessed to have a potential for injury will not be used or action will be taken to allow safe usage.
In the case of items, which cannot or should not be rectified by staff, the committee will be advised in writing of the problem and will then issue the staff a directive to follow.
Staff and other adults in the centre will model and encourage appropriate hygiene habits, including washing hands after going to the toilet and before eating. Premises will be clean and presentable at the start of each session with all dangerous materials stored out of reach of children at all times. All equipment will be cleaned/disinfected on a regular basis and kept in good condition.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES
It is the policy of the Encounter Lutheran College that in the event of an emergency situation arising at the College, the highest priority will be placed on ensuring the protection and safety of all members of the College community.
Staff will develop, practice and coordinate procedures in case of fire/emergency in accordance with guidelines of Encounter Lutheran College Workplace, Health and Safety and governing bodies for OSHC.
At least one evacuation and lockdown drill will be conducted each term.
Signs will be placed near the door of each room used for OSHC indicating the location to which its occupants should move in the event of an evacuation. Staff will inform families and their children of these signs. Procedures will be explained to families and their child/children to ensure all are familiar with exit routes, safety precautions and a predetermined safe area in case of fire. There is also a procedure in place for a lockdown. Emergency numbers are clearly displayed near a phone.

STAFF INFORMATION
We aim to provide a team of staff who are professional, approachable, understanding and committed to provide quality care. We promote a centre where teamwork and positive communication is in practice. All staff will have a current first aid certificate and suitable qualifications.

STUDENTS, VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS
Occasionally there may be new faces in the centre as volunteers and students visit the centre to gain experience in the childcare field. These new faces will also include relief staff that will sometimes be present at the centre. Every visitor is interviewed by the Co-ordinator and provided with guidelines to ensure that there is no disruption to the children’s daily routine. These visitors will be under the supervision of staff members and will not be left alone with the children. We will inform families and their children of any new faces in the centre.
ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

The service actively promotes the equality of employment opportunities primarily on merit (in line with Equal Employment Opportunity Legislation) and the elimination of discrimination towards employees, families and children in care on the grounds of sex, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, age, race, disability, religion, political belief or activity, trade union activity, association with or relation to person identified because of any of the above attributes (in line with the Anti Discrimination Act, 1991). The service aims to provide compassion and caring, security, freedom and training to employees, families and children.

IN CONCLUSION

We welcome your interest and input into the program. Please don’t hesitate to discuss any concerns or suggestions with the Co-ordinator. We look forward to getting to know you and your child/children very much, and hope your child/children will find their time with us to be both enjoyable and rewarding.

Tracey Ahrens,
Co-ordinator.