



A Handbook for Families



www.scotlandisland.org.au

Dear Families,

Welcome to Scotland Island & Offshore Children's Services. We are delighted that you have chosen our community kindergarten and OSHC as your preferred education for your child.

SIOCS is a small kindergarten and Out of School Hours Service nestled in the corner of Catherine Park on Scotland Island. We are surrounded by a beautiful natural environment, which we seek to engage with as the foundation of our program. We encourage you to spend time in the classrooms, at learning events and social engagements.

The information in this handbook is a starting point, but please feel most welcome to contact teaching staff and committee members at any time for further information.

All the best,

Louisa Maxim
Committee President

SIOCS Philosophy

We are currently working on developing our philosophy, and greatly appreciate any input from our children, staff, families and community.

Welcome to Scotland Island & Offshore Children's Services

SIOCS offers an extended hours preschool and long day care for children from 18 months through to 6 years of age, providing high quality education and care. We operate 3 – 5 days per week; depending on the requirements of our families and community, for 48 weeks of the year. We are closed on public holidays and for four weeks over the Christmas period.

We also offer an OSHC program which runs from the Community Hall from 4 – 6pm, along with Vacation Care workshops.

Our aim is to welcome and meet the needs of families in the community. It is our policy to work in partnership with families in the education and care of their children in the most important stage of their development that is 'the early years'.

SIOCS believes that every child has something to offer and much to take away. We strive to build upon the diverse cultural backgrounds of each child whilst promoting a sense of individual dignity, mutual respect and equality within our safe and natural learning environment.

SIOCS Details

Address: 73 Robertson Rd, Scotland Island, NSW, 2105

PO Box 363, Church Point, NSW, 2105

Phone: 02 9979 7856

Contact: director@siocs.com.au

siocscommittee@gmail.com

Website: www.scotlandisland.org.au

Payment of Fees

SIOCS finds the payment of fees, via the direct debit payment system, to be mutually beneficial; providing families with a hassle-free payment option and ensuring the service is financially viable.

Direct Debit payment forms are to be completed on enrolment at the service. Fees will be withdrawn weekly from your account and a receipt will be emailed to you on a monthly basis.

See Policy 2.9 '**Payment of Fees**' for further information. **Please Note:** All enrolled days are charged for regardless of non-attendance due to sickness, holidays, public holidays etc.

Payment of Bond

A Bond payment, of two weeks full fee, is required prior to the child's anticipated start date. It is preferable that this payment be made on enrolment at the service; this confirms the family's commitment to the service.

SIOCS reserves the right to refuse bond refund should a family fail to commence care as a result of changed personal circumstances; please ensure your decision is made carefully.

Requests for cancellation of enrolment must be presented, in writing, and may only be considered if received by the service 14 days prior to the scheduled commencement date. A \$50 administration fee will apply where a request for a refund is received within the applicable notice period.

If the enrolment place is terminated due to the non-payment of fees, the bond is non-refundable.

Current Fees/ Daily Rates

Age:

1 – 2 years	\$100
2 – 3 years	\$95
3 – 6 years	\$90

Please note: SIOCS reserves the right to make changes to the fee structure with notice to families. Our current fee structure reflects the different requirements of each age group with regards to staff:child ratios.

After Hours Penalty Fee

SIOCS is licensed from 7:30am – 6:00pm and therefore, reserves the right to charge parents a late fee if children are collected after the official closing time. Where there are mitigating circumstances and the parent/guardian contacts the service to inform them of the problem (also indicating when the parent/guardian or a substitute will collect the child) the Approved Provider has the option to waive the penalty fee.

Continual late collection of your child may result in your child's enrolment being reviewed.

Penalty fees are calculated on the basis of the overtime salary for the two employees that must remain in attendance for the child and are as follows:

- a) \$10 initial late fee
- b) \$1 per minute over service closing time

Parents / guardians will be informed when a penalty fee has been incurred. The amount will be added to the following week's invoicing.

Notice for Leaving the Service

SIOCS requires four week's notice to be given in writing, to the Approved Provider, in the instance of a family cancelling their enrolment position. If this notice is not given, there will be a charge incurred equal to two weeks' fees for that child.

Please note that a cancellation notice **will not** be accepted for the month of December. It is expected that families maintain their enrolment until the final day of the service's operation of the year as it is rarely feasible to offer your place to a new family at this time of year.

Finalising Enrolment for Children Attending School in the Next Calendar Year

SIOCS runs its yearly program between the months of January and December.

It is for this reason that SIOCS aims to enrol new children into the class year group with which they will eventually attend school. It is also for this reason that the service will finalise enrolments for children attending school in the next calendar year, in the December of the current year, or earlier if requested to do so by the parents/guardians.

As with any other enrolment the bond payment is allocated to the last two weeks fees.

Updating Personal and Contact Details

Every twelve months SIOCS will issue you with an abbreviated information form for you to complete to ensure that we maintain up-to-date enrolment data for each child at the service. This form will supply us with vital contact phone numbers which will be accessed in an emergency; it is, therefore, imperative that it be returned promptly.

Should your personal details change prior to this form being issued, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to inform SIOCS, in writing, of all changes.

Additional Casual Days

Additional casual days are available, at times, when absences occur in the service. Should you, on occasion, require an additional day at SIOCS, please advise the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor. A record of your requirements will be made and the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will advise you if your request is able to be approved. You may also call on the day you require assistance and where possible, SIOCS may be able to satisfy your request for an extra day.

Should you accept an 'additional casual day', your child will be added to the attendance record and you will be invoiced for this day in the next billing period.

Child Care Benefit (CCB)

CCB is a payment from the Australian Government that helps you with the cost of your child care.

Can I get Child Care Benefit?

You can get CCB if you are a parent, relationship parent, foster parent or grandparent with a child in your care who is attending child care approved by, or registered with, the Government.

The amount of CCB you get depends on:

- your income
- the type of care you use (approved or registered)
- the amount of care you use
- the reason you are using care
- the number of children you have in care

Approved care

The following are services approved by the Government to provide child care because they meet certain high quality standards and operating requirements. They include;

- Long Day Care
- Family Day Care
- Outside School Hours Care
- Occasional Care
- In Home Care

You can choose to allow an Approved Child Care Provider to receive CCB on your behalf from the Government, which means you pay less in fees out of your own pocket.

To get CCB, you need to meet these requirements;

Residency

You or your partner must be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident living in Australia or be exempted from the Government's residency requirements.

Immunisation

Children under seven must meet the Government's immunisation requirements or have an exemption.

Responsibility for child care payments

To get CCB you must be the one responsible for your child care costs. If your employer contributes to your child care through salary sacrificing or packaging, you should discuss with them who is responsible for the child care costs. If another agency or individual pays your child care on your behalf you should discuss with them who is responsible for the child care costs.

What is the work, training, study test?

This test determines how many hours of CCB you can get.

For Registered Care you and your partner must be working, training or studying or have an exemption from this test to get up to 50 hours of CCB per child per week. No minimum number of hours is required.

For Approved Care all families can get up to 24 hours of CCB per child per week. To get up to 50 hours you and your partner need to be working, training or studying for at least 15 hours per week (or 30 hours per fortnight) or have an exemption from this test.

Make sure you have been assessed for CCB by the Family Assistance Office

It's not enough to have a Customer Reference Number (CRN), as this could be issued for your Parenting Payment of Family Tax Benefit claim and doesn't mean you are eligible for CCB and CCR.

You have to ask to be assessed for CCB

The FAO will provide CRN's for you and your children. It is your responsibility to provide this information to SIOCS in writing.

Allowable Absences

Each child is eligible to receive CCB for an initial 42 days of absences, per financial year, which can be used for any reason and without proof of circumstances (includes public holidays). Once the initial 42 absence days have been exhausted, additional absences may be claimed in certain circumstances.

Additional absences

After the initial 42 absence days have been paid for a financial year only absences which meet the additional absence criteria will attract CCB.

Additional Absence reasons are:

- *an illness (with a medical certificate)*
- *any other absences due to sickness of the child, a parent/guardian or sibling, supported by medical certificates*
- *a parent being on a rotating shift or rostered day off*
- *a temporary closure of a school or a pupil free day*
- *shared custody arrangements due to a court order, consent order or parenting order*
- *attendance at preschool*
- *exceptional circumstances*
- *all additional absences require written evidence*

Should you exceed 42 absent from the service in any financial year and you don't meet the additional absence criteria; full fees will be charged to your account.

Families can obtain details of absences claimed by the service, including a count of absence days used, via the online statement available to them through the online services section of the FAO's website, and on the bottom right corner of your monthly statement.

Child Care Rebate (CCR)

The CCR is a payment from the Australian Government that helps working families with the cost of child care. If you are using approved child care for work, training or study-related reasons the Government will provide you with 50 per cent of your out-of-pocket child care costs, up to the annual cap of \$7,500 per child per year.

Out-of-pocket expenses mean the amount you pay for child care after your CCB and Jobs, Education and Training Child Care fee assistance (JETCCFA) amounts are taken out.

You have the option to receive your CCR paid weekly, either directly to your bank account, or through your child care service provider as a fee reduction. You still have the option of having your CCR paid quarterly or annually as a lump sum directly to your bank account.

Who can get the CCR?

There are certain requirements you must meet to get the CCR. You must have:

- used approved child care
- been eligible for Child Care Benefit (CCB) (entitled at a rate of zero or more)*
- passed the work, training, study test (for the purposes of the rebate).

Note: There is no income test for the CCR. If you are eligible for CCB but your CCB entitlement is zero due to income, you may still be eligible for the CCR.

There are four ways to receive your CCR:

- Direct to your approved child care service paid one week in arrears
- Direct to your bank account paid one week in arrears
- Quarterly payment to your bank account
- Annual payment to your bank account

Centrelink Online Service

Centrelink can give you access to an online service where you can track the submission of child care attendance details and payments under your CRN.

<http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/dhs/centrelink>

Call Centrelink or the Family Assistance Office on **13 61 50** to check on this and other details.

Priority of Access

Scotland Island & Offshore Children's Services, along with all children's services, are required to follow the placement/enrolment priority of access guidelines of the Federal Government.

First Priority: A child 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 Family Assistance Act.

Third Priority: Any other child.

Priorities within each category of priority

Within each priority mentioned above, the following children are to be given priority;

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Children in families which include a person with a disability
- Children in families which include an individual whose taxable income percentage under Clause 7 of Schedule 2 to the Family Assistance Act is 100%
- Children in families with a CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) background
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents
- Sibling/s at SIOCS

We reserve the right to terminate care on 4 weeks' notice where a child no longer meets the Priority of Access guidelines and another child is requiring care that falls within the guidelines.

Licensing & Regulation

All SIOCS services are licensed by the NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate Department of Education and Communities (DEC).

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) is an independent statutory authority, their role in early childhood education and care is to monitor and promote the consistent application of the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and Education and Care Services Regulation 2011 across all states and territories; they are also responsible for overseeing the application of the National Quality Standards across nationally and to ensure that early childhood education and care services are operating in line with all elements of the National Quality Framework.

SIOCS embraces the National Quality Framework in its everyday practices;

National Quality Standard - The NQS gives families a clear understanding about the quality of care and education being provided to their children. The NQS has been put into place to ensure that Early Childhood Education and Care setting across Australia are being operated with the same quality standards in mind.

National Quality Rating System – consists of five levels, including a quality rating for seven key areas of childhood development. The National Quality Rating System will be conducted similarly to that of the previous National Childcare Accreditation Council; an assessor for the national body will conduct a detailed assessment of each and every service, providing a rating of the overall quality of the service.

Early Years Learning Framework – forms the foundation for ensuring that children in all early childhood education and care settings experience quality teaching and learning.

Scotland Island & Offshore Children's Services are operated by an approved provider which is a committee made up of parents and members of the Scotland Island and Offshore Community.

SIOCS have developed an in-depth selection of policies and procedures to assist in guiding Educators in understanding their roles and responsibilities under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and to ensure high quality provisions and consistent compliance.

Our Participation in the National Quality Framework Assessment & Rating Process

All education and care services covered under the National Law are required to participate in the National Quality Framework Assessment and Rating Process. Key to the National Quality Framework is continuous quality improvement. Authorised Officers from the Regulatory Authority in each state and territory (for NSW is the Department of Education & Communities) are responsible for assessing and rating education and care services against the National Quality Standard.

An integral part of the assessment and rating process is the services Quality Improvement Plan. Services must;

- evaluate their current practices through self-assessment against the NQS, then
- identify the practices they can or should improve,
- plan effectively to implement them,
- quality improvement plan must be a live document that is continually evolving.

The Quality Improvement Plan must be submitted to the Regulatory Authority within three months of the service approval. A current plan must be kept on the services premises and made available to families and regulators.

Families are very much a part of this and all families are welcome to work with the employees in this ongoing process. Please see the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor for information regarding the service's Quality Improvement Plan and the role you can play.

SIOCS incorporates the 'high quality' principles of the National Quality Framework into our operations, policies and procedures. We do this to ensure that we are always working to the highest standards set by the sector in quality education and care.

For your information, listed below are the National Quality Standards, seven Quality Areas (a National Benchmark) in which services self-assess themselves against to ensure they are delivering quality education and care.

Quality Area 1: *Educational Program & Practice*

Quality Area 2: *Children's Health & Safety*

Quality Area 3: *Physical Environment*

Quality Area 4: *Staffing Arrangements*

Quality Area 5: *Relationships with Children*

Quality Area 6: *Collaborative Partnerships with Families & Communities*

Quality Area 7: *Leadership & Service Management*

SIOCS Curriculum Development

The SIOCS philosophy reflects our approach to the care and education of young children. We strive to provide children with opportunities to explore their interests whilst supporting them in their endeavour to further develop their skills across all areas of personal development.

At SIOCS we believe that children are individuals who grow and develop at their own pace. We believe that children are capable, resourceful and independent in their learning.

Our programs offer spontaneous opportunities for children to experiment with learning, whilst also providing planned experiences designed to assist with specific skill development and education. We offer environments that support and facilitate exploration and discovery and invite children to participate in individual and small group experiences, which are specific to their needs and interests.

Educators at the service will document, throughout the year, children's learning and experiences in the form of reflective journals and developmental records. Families are invited to view all records relating to their child's learning and development at any time upon request.

Fundamentals of our curriculum

- Reflective Journals (records, observations and photographs of daily experiences in which children participated in)
- Individual Child Portfolios (documentation of each individual child and their learning over a period of time)
- Developmental Summaries (a developmental record, individual to each child's development and skill level)

- Involvement in Learning Projects (documentation of Interest-based learning)
- Daily Routines (Everyday learning about self-help and social skills)

SIOCS' curriculum is reflective of the 'Early Years Learning Framework', the 'Emergent Curriculum' and 'Reggio Emilia' approaches.

We pride ourselves in implementing the most current trends and thinking in early childhood in Australia and see the importance of continually reviewing our curriculum styles and providing our employees with opportunities to further develop their knowledge as early childhood theories and approaches continue to evolve.

Educators at all of our services implement many aspects of the **Early Year Learning Framework – Belonging, Being and Becoming** into the planning, reflection and extension of learning experiences that are planned for children in their early years.

Along with the implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework, our aim for all children is to extend and enrich learning opportunities from birth and prepare them for a life beyond SIOCS.

Our qualified and passionate Educators work in consultation with children, their families and other Educators to provide learning opportunities to engage children and challenging their curiosity to learn and develop.

Early Years Learning Framework

From before birth children are connected to family, community, culture and place. Their earliest development and learning takes place through those relationships.

As children participate in everyday life, they develop interests and construct their own identities and understanding of the world.

Experiencing **Belonging** – knowing where and with whom you belong.

Being recognises the significance of the here and now in children's lives, knowing themselves and engaging in life's joys and complexities and meeting challenges.

Becoming reflects the process of rapid and significant change in the early years as young children learn and grow.

From Belonging, Being & Becoming. The Early Years Framework for Australia.

5 Learning Outcomes have been identified for both Learning Frameworks;

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators

These learning outcomes can be described as '*broad long term goals of competencies, processes, understanding and dispositions*', which are designed to capture the integrated and complex learning and development of all children.

Individual Learning Journeys

SIOCS values the time it takes to grow and understands that every child learns in a way that is individual to them as a human being.

Our Educators gather information through close observation of each child and the experiences they are engaged in; these learning experiences are documented, reflecting upon the processes children use, their interactions and relationships as well as their overall development as an individual.

Our Educators use this information to plan and deliver suitable opportunities for everyday learning based on children's interests, learning preferences and relationships to stimulate, challenge and extend learning.

All children are viewed as having strengths, abilities and interests, each of which are unique to the child as an individual and as a part of our community.

Relationships with educators and other children are nurtured and in turn enable children to collaborate with others while promoting their own learning experiences and outcomes.

Documentation on the program is always available to families and your input and feedback is always welcomed. SIOCS educators welcome any discussions regarding your child, their interests, development and progress within the programs.

Documenting Children's Learning

Educators will document each child's individual and group learning experiences in the following ways;

- Individual Child Portfolio
- Developmental Summaries
- Group Learning Stories & Daily Reflections
- Curriculum and Critical Reflections
- General and Developmental Observations
- Programs & Curriculum Development

Partnerships with Families

Child and Family Orientation

SIOCS hosts an orientation evening, in October/November of each year, for families and children who are due to commence care the following year. Families who commence care mid-year are encouraged to arrange an orientation session at a mutually suitable time.

During orientation, families and children have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the educators, the service environment and general day-to-day operations of the service.

In the first few weeks of care, families are encouraged to be flexible and sympathetic to their child's settling in process - this supports the child as they form attachments and a sense of belonging in this new and unfamiliar environment.

Families are encouraged to provide SIOCS with feedback on their individual orientation process so that management is able to build upon and further develop this process for future children and families.

Family Transition Information Evening

SIOCS offers a 'Transition Information Evening' in September/October for families of children who currently attend the service, who are transitioning to primary school the following year. In this information session, educators share their teaching philosophies in regards to school readiness with families and offer a time for discussion and reflection.

It is common for us to invite a guest speaker from a local public school to reiterate how our teachings go hand in hand with preparing children for their first year in primary school.

Participation at SIOCS

SIOCS acknowledges and values each family and their role in the SIOCS community and encourages their contributions within the service's operations.

The following communication plan is designed to assist the service in maintaining open avenues for communication between families, employees and management. SIOCS communicates through the form of;

- Service website and electronic mail
- Grievance procedures
- Orientation and induction procedures for new families
- Parent library- containing information relevant to families
- Information flyers and factsheets distributed to families
- Service notice boards and room communication boards

- Parent communication slips
- Parent contributions to the program are asked for daily in the journal
- Parent contribution form in child portfolios
- Meetings between employees, families and management
- Parent information evenings
- Parent surveys and feedback forms
- Comments on Developmental Summaries which are sent home biannually

During the service's hours of operation, Policy 2.3 'Open Door Policy' offers parents and other family members and friends with the opportunity to participate in daily routines, cultural celebrations and other special events at the service.

Environment and Maintenance (E&M)

We try to keep fees as low as possible and naturally the more maintenance and improvement work that can be done by parents the better. To keep the kindergarten an attractive and safe place to be in, it is vital for parents to give a small amount of their time for this work. Maintenance includes work done on the school grounds, outside equipment, the shell of the buildings, covering library books and some types of classroom assistance. There is one working bee held each term. If parents are unable to attend these dates a fee is charged in lieu. This amount is on a pro-rata basis for Preschool families (e.g. \$30/day enrolled.) a maximum of \$150.

Parents at SIOCS

It is fundamental to SIOCS' philosophy and day to day operation that the home and school environments are compatible and that parents are aware of, and involved in their child's education. Parents vary in the amount of knowledge they possess concerning SIOCS, but all parents require some orientation to this unique program. Some form of continual involvement is helpful in order to maintain awareness, because the service is an evolving environment.

There are many ways in which parents may participate and contribute to SIOCS –

Spend time in your child's group, either as a 'kid' or as a helper

Attend parent evenings/afternoons

Attend learning forums

Talk with staff and parents

Assist with organisational tasks, e.g. washing dress-ups, cleaning blocks, cleaning the wet area, mending books, sweeping outside classroom areas (liaise with your child's class teacher about this)

Share a special skill or interest, e.g. dance, photography, storytelling, carpentry

Attend the working bees

Accompany staff on excursions

Attend social functions

Hold a position on the committee or assist with working parties

Working in Partnership with Families and Children

At SIOCS, educators and management work collaboratively with families of children who have additional needs and/or developmental delays. Families are encouraged to seek advice and support from educators in order to arrange developmental assistance and assessments where a delay or additional need is suspected.

Children with diagnosed delays or disabilities will be supported through individualised programs designed to assist them with achieving personal objectives and goals.

Educators from the service will work in collaboration with the child, their family, external professionals and support agencies to ensure programs suit the individual child's particular developmental needs.

Inclusion

Every child has the right to feel a sense of belonging, to feel a part of something special and the opportunity to strive to their full potential. At SIOCS, we are committed to know each child as an individual and treat each child respectfully, appreciating and valuing their unique qualities and deliver an educational environment that provides opportunities for individual development and success.

SIOCS employs a 'Support Worker', where necessary, who is available to assist Educators who are caring for a child or children who have additional needs.

When children, with identified needs, enter our care we liaise closely with the early intervention services already working with the child and their family; this enables us to develop strategies and knowledge as to the most appropriate ways to care for, communicate with and support the child during their time at SIOCS.

Fostering partnerships with families are of high importance for us, and we aim to make ourselves available to discuss any education and care requirements your child may have to assist us in facilitating their access to early intervention services for assessment and support.

As part of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP), the Inclusion Support Subsidy (ISS) plays a key role in supporting eligible child care services to include children with ongoing high support needs in quality care.

The introduction of the ISS has a number of benefits for families and children using an early childhood education and care service, including;

- assistance for services that are linked to building capacity to include all children
- equitable access to assistance across service types
- flexibility in use of funding
- streamlined application and payment processes

SIOCS works closely with other external agencies to support children with additional needs, including those from different language and cultural backgrounds, and those whose circumstances may otherwise disadvantage them.

Our qualified team monitor the development of children in our education and care service, understanding that the first years of life are developmentally critical, and intend to make sure your child has optimum opportunities for normal development.

If we have any concerns about your child's development, we will work with you to provide appropriate advice and links within your local community. Where early intervention is indicated, we will work alongside you, to assess the implementation of experiences and strategies within our service to ensure the support for you and your child is always available.

Essentials for a Good Day

Clothing

SIOCS is located in a fabulous bushland setting which we fully utilise. The children are frequently involved in digging for clay, grinding rocks to make paint, exploring and climbing, along with activities such as painting, sculpting, playing with playdough, digging in the sandpit and simply sitting on the ground. As a result we recommend 'SIOCS clothes' - clothes which children and parents don't mind getting dirty (possibly permanently).

We suggest that you send children in 'layers' of clothing to cope with the often changing weather conditions. Children may need warm clothing on arrival and lighter clothing in the middle of the day to be comfortable.

A spare set of clothes is also suggested to be in the children's bag (especially for those children who like to get wet at the creek!)

PLEASE HAVE ALL CHILDREN'S CLOTHES MARKED CLEARLY WITH THEIR NAME

Lost Property

There is a box (both in Preschool and Primary) into which all found items (not labelled) are placed. Children often do not recognise their own belongings, especially clothes. All items of children's clothing brought to school need to be clearly marked with child's name. Please check the lost property box regularly. At the end of each term, clothing that is not claimed is sent to a local charity.

Celebrating Birthdays at SIOCS

SIOCS values special milestones, such as a child's birthday and welcomes children to share their birthday celebrations with their peers at the service. Due to childhood allergies, we request that families provide nut-free cakes in order to ensure that the service's nut free & allergy policies (Policy 5.4 & 5.5) are acknowledged. A list of ingredients must be attached to the cake.

Birthday Invitations

Please discuss distribution of party invitations with the Nominated Supervisor and/or the senior educators in the child's room. We ask that families be aware of the sensitive nature attached to external social events where limited children may be invited. Please note that it is not the responsibility of SIOCS employees to distribute invitations or collect RSVP's to a child's birthday party.

Immunisation

The Public Health Amendment (Vaccination of Children Attending Child Care Facilities) Act 2013 comes into force from 1 January 2014. The changes to the Public Health Act will mean that a child's vaccination status must be provided to a child care centre before enrolment.

Parents or guardians will need to provide evidence when applying to enrol their child in a child care centre that their child:

- is fully vaccinated for their age, or;
- has a medical reason not to be vaccinated, or;
- has a conscientious objection, including religious beliefs, to vaccination or;
- is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind with their vaccinations.

Vaccination is the best way to protect a child from serious disease. If most children are vaccinated this also protects those who are too young to be vaccinated, or those who can't be vaccinated because of medical conditions. The NSW Immunisation Schedule sets out the age-appropriate vaccines for children.

It is the parent's or guardian's choice whether to vaccinate their child.

Children who are unvaccinated for medical or conscientious reasons, or are behind on their immunisation schedule, will still be able to be enrolled in child care provided that the appropriate document has been provided.

If a child is immunised, what document will be needed to enroll in child care?

A copy of the Immunisation History Statement, issued by the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register, will need to be given to the service prior to enrolment.

Families will receive an Immunisation History Statement in the mail after their child has completed their 18 month and 3½ - 4 year old vaccinations.

A copy of an Immunisation History Statement can also be obtained at any time:

- by calling the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809
- through Medicare Online Services at www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online
- by requesting a statement by emailing acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au
- by visiting the local Department of Human Services Service Centre, Medicare office or Centrelink office

If a child is unimmunised or late, what documents will be needed to enroll in child care?

- An ACIR** Immunisation Exemption Conscientious Objection Form (IMMU12) which has been certified by an immunisation provider and a parent/guardian, or;
- An ACIR** Immunisation Exemption - Medical Contraindication Form (IMMU11) which has been certified by an immunisation provider, or;
- An ACIR** Immunisation History form on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule.

** These forms need to be signed by the doctor/immunisation provider and lodged with Medicare and a copy provided by the parent to the child care centre on enrolment.

Immunisation Schedule

AGE	DISEASE	VACCINE
Birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis B 	H-B-VAX II
2 months <i>Can be given as early as 6 weeks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, <i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib), Hepatitis B, Polio 	INFANRIX HEXA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pneumococcal 	PREVENAR 13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotavirus 	ROTARIX
4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, <i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib), Hepatitis B, Polio 	INFANRIX HEXA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pneumococcal 	PREVENAR 13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotavirus 	ROTARIX
6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, 	INFANRIX HEXA

	<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib), Hepatitis B, Polio	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pneumococcal 	PREVENAR 13
12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measles, Mumps, Rubella 	MMR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib), Meningococcal C 	MENITORIX
18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella 	PRIORIX TETRA
4 years <i>Can be given as early as 3½ years</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio 	INFANRIX IPV
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measles, Mumps, Rubella <i>(if child has not had 2 doses of measles-mumps-rubella containing vaccine)</i> 	MMR

To ensure you have the most current Immunisation Schedule, you can visit the website below;

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/schedule.aspx>

Exclusion Periods

Educators and other employees implement processes to maintain and limit the spread of disease and prevent illness in our service.

Families are, on occasion, asked to keep their child at home (called 'exclusion') in the event of illness or disease within the service. The aim of exclusion is to reduce the spread of infectious diseases in the care service. The less contact there is between people who have an infectious disease and people who are at risk of catching the disease, the less chance the disease has of spreading.

Why is my child being excluded?

SIOCS understand that, as a family, you are under pressure to fulfil work, study or other family commitments and may find the exclusion periods difficult to manage.

By excluding one ill child, many other children (and employees) can be protected from becoming ill. The need for exclusion and the length of time a child is excluded depends on:

- how easily the infection can spread
- how long the child is likely to be infectious
- how severe the disease can be.

SIOCS will always refer to a list of recommended minimum exclusion periods, depending on the illness / disease at hand.

In some situations Doctor's clearance will be required for the child to return to care (ie rash, infectious conditions), however, the child must also be well enough to participate

in the programs and activities. If a child is displaying symptoms of lethargy, drowsiness, poor appetite, or pain/discomfort we will advise the parents that their child is not well enough to attend the centre. We believe a child who is feeling unwell needs to be in one on one care of their primary carer or a family member.

Recommended minimum exclusion periods

NHMRC (2012) *Staying healthy – Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* provides a list of the recommended minimum exclusion periods (Table 1.1). You can view this resource at www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ch55 .

These are minimum exclusion periods, however a child may need to stay home for longer until he/she is well enough to return to the service.

Educators and other staff working in the education and care service are also required to follow the recommended minimum exclusion periods.

Note: The NHMRC recommends that children who are physically unwell should be excluded from attending school, pre-school and child care centres.

Medication at the Service

Medication will only be administered, by the employees of SIOCS, when it has been prescribed by a medical practitioner and a consent form has been signed by either a parent/guardian or another authorised person, as nominated in the child's enrolment form. Medication must be accompanied by a medical certificate stating the child's full name, the dosage and the time the medication is required to be administered.

SIOCS will administer paracetamol in the case of a high temperature after seeking the permission of a parent or legal guardian of the child; the parent or guardian are required then to make arrangements to collect their child. Please be aware that paracetamol may in fact relieve a child's fever, however it also masks symptoms which may make it difficult for a doctor to deliver a true diagnoses of your child's illness.

For safety reasons, it is important that NO MEDICATION BE LEFT IN A CHILD'S BAG. All medication must be delivered to a SIOCS employee, by the child's parent or guardian, upon arrival at the service. A Medication Authority Form Appendix 4.1a needs to be completed by the parent or guardian prior to medication being administered.

Injury at the Service

It is at the discretion of the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor to decide whether the extent of a child's injury warrants contacting the child's parents. If the injury is considered serious enough (e.g. knocks to the head, swelling around injuries or

suspected broken limbs) to contact the child's parents or guardian, then the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will attempt to do so.

If the injury is severe enough to warrant medical treatment, the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will contact appropriate medical professionals.

A record of all child injuries/accidents will be maintained in the child's personnel file at SIOCS. Educators will ensure that parents are informed verbally, and in writing on the day of the incident.

As child's play can, on occasion, accidentally result in an injury, SIOCS will not disclose the name of any child who has injured another due to confidentiality reasons.

Sun and Skin Care Policy

The protection of each child's skin, against immediate and long-term damage, is of paramount consideration when planning for the outdoor environment at SIOCS. For this reason, the following procedures will be monitored and reviewed in line with the National Cancer Council 'SunSmart' recommendations:

- SIOCS are aware that sun safety precautions need to be taken all year round and that the UV index varies within the different seasons of the year. SIOCS will plan outdoor play experiences based on sun exposure recommendations sourced from the National Cancer Council.
- SIOCS supplies SPF 30+ sunscreen and will apply it to each child's skin before they enter the outdoor area.
- SIOCS will ensure that each child wears an appropriate 'SunSmart' hat and suitable clothing when outdoors. We ask that families supply their child with an appropriate hat and clothing. In the instance where a child is without their own sun safe hat/clothing, SIOCS will supply them with a kindy hat/clothing for that day.

Individual Child Health Conditions

SIOCS is committed to the management of medical conditions to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children at our service. SIOCS is also committed to ensuring that our employees are equipped with the knowledge and skills to identify and manage medical situations; in order for us to do so, we ask that all families who have a child with a known medical condition correspond with SIOCS to ensure our employees are aware of triggers and able to identify situations should they arise.

SIOCS ensures that a qualified 'First Aid Officer' is on the premises at all times of operation.

Management of a child who has asthma

As children under 6 years of age, generally do not have the understandings to recognise and manage their own asthma themselves, SIOCS recognised the importance in ensuring that our employees are adequately trained and qualified to identify and manage children's asthma.

Please refer to Policy 5.1 Managing children with asthma.

If your child has been diagnosed with Asthma, you must complete the 'Asthma Health Care Plan' in consultation with your child's General Practitioner and return it to the centre with all relevant medications.

Where there is a known diagnosed case of asthma, SIOCS will ensure that a risk minimisation assessment has been completed in consultation with the family and that all employees are aware of the possible triggers for this child.

Management of a child who has diabetes

As the management of diabetes in children is often very unique to the individual child, SIOCS will work in close consultation with the child's family to ensure the management plan is appropriate for the needs of the child.

Please refer to Policy 5.2 managing children with diabetes.

If your child has been diagnosed with diabetes, you must complete the 'Diabetes Health Care Plan' in consultation with your child's General Practitioner and return it to the centre with all relevant medication to assist us in managing this condition whilst your child is in our care.

Where there is a known diagnosed case of diabetes, SIOCS will ensure that a risk minimisation assessment has been completed in consultation with the family and that all employees are aware of the possible triggers for this child.

Management of a child who has epilepsy

As epileptic seizures can often be spontaneous, SIOCS will ensure that all employees are aware of the risk management and first aid treatment for a child who experiences a seizure.

Please refer to Policy 5.3 Managing children with epilepsy.

If your child has been diagnosed with epilepsy, you must complete the 'Epilepsy Health Care Plan' in consultation with your child's General Practitioner and return it to us with any risk management / seizure management information.

Where there is a known diagnosed case of epilepsy, SIOCS will ensure that a risk minimisation assessment has been completed in consultation with the family and that all employees are aware of the possible triggers for this child.

Management of a child who has anaphylaxis

Children who have been diagnosed with anaphylaxis must, at all times, have with them a CURRENT EpiPen. Parents of children who have been diagnosed with anaphylaxis are asked to ensure that the child's EpiPen is in date and must be on the premises at all times while their child is in care at SIOCS.

Please refer to Policy 5.4 Managing children with anaphylaxis

If your child has been diagnosed with anaphylaxis, you must complete the 'Anaphylaxis Health Care Plan' in consultation with your child's General Practitioner and return it to the service.

Where there is a known diagnosed case of anaphylaxis, SIOCS will ensure that a risk minimisation assessment has been completed in consultation with the family and that all employees are aware of the possible triggers for this child.

Child Protection

Emergency Evacuation / Lockdown

At SIOCS, we schedule emergency evacuation / lockdown drills to occur every 3 months to ensure that all children, employees and other regular contact staff are aware of the procedures in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all persons at SIOCS.

At every exit of our service, we have posted our evacuation procedure and route, please familiarise yourself with this information.

Working with Children's Check

All SIOCS employees have been screened via the national Working with Children's Check.

A Working with Children Check is a prerequisite for anyone in child-related work. It involves a national criminal history check and review of findings of workplace misconduct. The result of a Working with Children Check is either a clearance to work with children for five years, or a bar against working with children. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring.

Protecting the Rights of the Child

SIOCS services are committed to provide learning environments and experiences for children that are of the highest standard, following ethical conduct in accordance with the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics (2010), the United Nations Convention on

the Rights of the Child (1989), SIOCS's Service Philosophy and all service policies and procedures.

We have in place a thorough induction process for all employees to ensure their knowledge is adequate in relation to the rights of the child and their responsibilities in the protection of all children, not just those at our service.

Child Protection

All SIOCS Employees, on induction, are given a child protection information pack 'keeping them safe' which informs them of the responsibilities as a mandatory reporter.

'Keeping the safe' is a shared approach to child wellbeing in NSW, to reshape the way family and community services are delivered in NSW to improve the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people. The goal of 'keeping them safe' is that all children in NSW are healthy, happy and safe, and grow up belonging in families and communities where they have opportunities to reach their full potential.

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics - Employee code of conduct...

In relation to Children:

- We act in the best interest of all children
- We recognise that young children are vulnerable and use our influence and power in their best interests. This includes the relevant child protection directives in relation to children at risk of significant harm
- We acknowledge the uniqueness and potential of each child
- We help children learn to interact effectively, and in doing so to learn to balance their own rights, needs, and feelings with those of others
- We ensure that our work with children is based on their interests and needs and lets them know they have a contribution to make
- We acknowledge the worth of cultural and linguistic diversity that children bring into the environment
- We create and maintain a environment where all children feel safe and secure
- We work to ensure that young children are not discriminated against on the basis of gender, age, race, religion, language, ability, culture, or national origin

In relation to Families:

- We strive to develop positive relationships with families based on mutual trust and open communication
- We create an atmosphere where families develop a sense of belonging and inclusion
- We engage in shared decision making with families were appropriate
- We aim to respect families privacy, cultural diversity, customs, language and beliefs

In relation to our colleagues:

The Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics tells us that 'early childhood communities ought to be spaces and places where practices such as responsive listening and dialogue can build connections and relationships which sustain and advance individual and collective wellbeing'.

At SIOCS, it is our duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children within our care at all times.

The Approved Provider also has a duty of care to the employees to provide a safe and non-fearful working environment.

It is the expectation of SIOCS that all parents/guardians and other adults model acceptable behaviour at all times within the service.

Family Code of Conduct

In line with SIOCS' Philosophy:

- Families shall treat employees with respect and courtesy and without harassment
- Families shall become familiar with the service's policies and procedures
- Families shall work collaboratively with their child's educator/s to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child
- Families shall bring to the educator's, Approved Provider's or Nominated Supervisor's attention any concerns regarding behaviour of their own child or another child. For confidential reasons, employees are not able to discuss another child with any parent or guardian. SIOCS employees will manage the communication of such feedback as per the Policy 2.6 Complaints, Grievances and Feedback.

Examples of behaviour that will not be tolerated at SIOCS:

- Inappropriate language such as swearing, using demeaning language or non-supportive language, inappropriate written material (including emails)
- Inappropriate conduct such as consumption of alcohol or drugs or smoking on the premises
- Inappropriate contact with young children
- Parents/guardians addressing, for the purpose of corrective discipline, a child that is not their own

Although employees are available for parents/guardians to speak with briefly at all times, please make an appointment with the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor so that any concerns can be adequately dealt with or alternatively you may follow the grievance procedure as found in Appendix 2.6 Complaints, Grievances and Feedback

SIOCS reserves the right to terminate an enrolment at any time due to the parent/guardian displaying inappropriate behaviour as shown by examples above.

Privacy

In order to protect the privacy of personal and sensitive information of families, children, employees and the service, SIOCS maintains the right to limit or prohibit any interactions and correspondence via electronic media (such as Facebook, Instagram, Email, Twitter or similar) between employees and families. Posting of photos of SIOCS families, children and employees via electronic media is also prohibited.

The detailing of any facts or opinions regarding the business, daily work environment, employees and clients is prohibited. This applies to any employees or families currently enrolled or previously enrolled at the service. Further information is detailed in Policy 5.12 Protecting Personal & Sensitive Information and Use of Online Social Sites and you are required to familiarise yourself with this policy at the commencement of your child/ren's enrolment.

SIOCS Policies and Procedures Manual

SIOCS have a comprehensive Policy & Procedure manual in place to ensure the overall operation of our service is maintained at the very highest standard. Please see attached our 'Policy & Procedure Manual Index' for a full list of our policies and procedures.

You will find a copy of our Policy & Procedure Manual in our foyer. If you would like a copy of any of these policies, please contact the Approved provider.

We will often ask our families, employees and wider community for feedback regarding our policies and procedures, we invite you to share any relevant feedback with us.

Committee Contacts

SIOCS Committee			
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