

## After Hours Care Program



## Parent Handbook Current as of February 2018

## Introduction

Distinctive Options is a not-for-profit organisation that began in Sunbury over 25 years ago and is now running programs in Melton, St Albans and Bendigo. We work with and support people to achieve the best possible life outcomes. Our aim is to improve the quality of life for people with a disability and their family.

The Distinctive Options Afters Hours Care program was created in response to the needs of families of children with complex needs in and around Sunbury and Melton. The program has been approved by the Victorian Department of Education and licensed with the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

We operate under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010)* and *Education and Care Services National Regulations Act (2011)*. Our programs meet Australian and Victorian education regulations, including the National Quality Framework and the My Time Our Place framework.

This handbook provides all of the information families need to know about the after school care program including:

- Venue details and contact information
- Enrolment and fees
- Programming
- Medical and emergency management

If there is any further information that parents or guardians are unsure about, please contact any of our friendly after school care staff or read through our policies and procedures which are available from the program at all times.

### Philosophy

We aim to provide a high quality, flexible and accountable after school care program which offers a range of activities to encourage children to develop in a safe and fun environment. Children's physical, emotional and social needs are respected and their individual uniqueness is valued. We acknowledge the often complex needs of each child attending the program and aim to respond to these needs with sensitivity and respect. Children's and staff member's different views, values and beliefs are celebrated and shared. We encourage parental and community participation and welcome open discussion on all issues relevant to the service's operation. We aim for continuous improvement in all aspects of our program and service.

### Program Goals

The goals of our after school care program are:

- To provide safe, secure and stimulating care for children
- To enable each child to develop emotionally, socially, physically and culturally
- To meet individual needs and appreciate children's diversity
- To enable each child to grow in skill, confidence and responsibilities
- To provide each child with a sense of acceptance, accomplishment, growth and competence
- To enable staff and families to develop a relationship built on trust and respect
- To enable families to spend time working or with their family without being concerned about the welfare, safety and care of their child

## Venue Details

Program	Address	Hours	Places
Sunbury & Macedon Ranges Specialist School	127-143 Circular Drive, Sunbury	3:00pm – 6:00pm	15
Melton Specialist School	159-211 Coburns Road, Melton	3:00pm – 6:00pm	20

## Program Contacts

For all enquiries, comments or grievances please contact the program's Educational Leader.

Sunbury Educational Leader: *Lisa McNeil*  
0429 460 592  
[lisa.mcneil@d-o.com.au](mailto:lisa.mcneil@d-o.com.au)

Melton Educational Leader: *Wendy Lindsay*  
0447 085 696  
[wendy.lindsay@d-o.com.au](mailto:wendy.lindsay@d-o.com.au)

Program Coordinator *Sarah Quigley*  
0439 223 167  
Suite 12, 36 Macedon Street Sunbury VIC 3429  
[sarah.quigley@d-o.com.au](mailto:sarah.quigley@d-o.com.au)

## Feedback

Feedback from families, including children, in relation to the after school care program is valuable to management and all staff involved. We encourage you to let us know how we are going and provide us with suggestions to improve the experience for you and your children. Feedback received is communicated with staff and is used in future planning and professional development.

## Parent/Guardian Obligations

Parents/guardians are obliged to:

1. Provide **all** details requested on the enrolment form.
2. Sign out children when collecting them from the program.
3. Collect children within the operating hours of the program.
4. Pay all fees regularly and on time.
5. Inform the Educational Leader of any issues relating to the health and wellbeing of children.
6. Keep children at home if they are unwell or have an infectious disease.

## National Disability Insurance Scheme

Distinctive Options is a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider. The After Hours Care program may come under the support category of (4) Assistance with Social and Community Participation or (9) Increased Social and Community Participation. Families may choose to include Outside School Hours Care in their child's individualised plan to cover the program fees. Families who are in the process of creating a plan for their child should contact Melanie East, the NDIS Coordinator at Distinctive Options, by email at [melanie.east@d-o.com.au](mailto:melanie.east@d-o.com.au) or on 9740 7100 to make a time to create a service agreement.



## Complaints, Grievances and Appeals

If a child, staff member, parent or guardian feels dissatisfied or concerned about the conditions of the service they are encouraged to seek a resolution as quickly as possible. Grievances and complaints will be addressed, investigated and managed fairly and documented in a timely manner. An effort should first be made to resolve the matter amicably and informally with the parties involved. If this is unsuccessful, the nominated supervisor or program coordinator should be contacted. If the complaint cannot be resolved internally, it can be directed to the Victorian Department of Education and Training. Records of any formal complaints and processes towards resolution will be documented and retained. The Victorian Department of Education will immediately be contacted where a complaint alleges the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised or that the law has been breached.

## Enrolment and Orientation

### Enrolment

All children are entitled to enrol in the program. Enrolment forms can be collected from the school office or Distinctive Options. Enrolment forms are also available on the Distinctive Options website. Before enrolling, parents/guardians and children are encouraged to visit the program to meet staff and discuss their children's needs.

In order to attend the program, each child must have a completed enrolment form and be formally accepted into the program. Staff reserve the right to discuss a child's needs with their classroom teacher and/or school welfare officer (or equivalent) before the child starts attending the program.

Enrolment is an annual process and attendance in the previous year does not guarantee a place in the current year.

### Casual Bookings

Children may be booked in for regular attendance each week or may attend on a casual basis. When attending as a casual, parents/carers **must inform both the Educational Leader and the school.**

Parents/carers may inform the Educational Leader of casual attendance via text message or phone call to the program mobile number. This should be done by 11am.

The unanticipated arrival of children is a significant risk to the staff and children enrolled in the program. For this reason, parents/carers must inform the Educational Leader of casual attendance at the earliest possible time. This allows us to ensure that the program is adequately staffed and resourced. Where a parent/carer has not informed the Educational Leader about a casual attendance and the child turns up, the parent/carer or the child's nominated contacts will be called to pick the child up.

### Cap

Our Sunbury after school care program has a maximum of 15 available positions for students in 2018. Our Melton after school care program has a maximum of 20 available positions for students in 2018. If the program is full, the child's details will be placed on a waiting list and access will be based on priority of access criteria.

## Priority of Access

In the event that applications exceed places available, a priority of access will apply according to Australian Government requirements where places will be allocated to those families with the greatest need for child care support.

- Priority 1** a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- Priority 2** a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work, training, study test under section 14 of the A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- Priority 3** any other child

In each of these categories, priority is further given to: children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, children in families which include a disabled person, children in families with low incomes, children in families with a non-English speaking background, children in socially isolated families and children of single parents.

## Confidentiality

The program collects sensitive information for enrolment records with family consent. Only information required for effective service delivery is collected. Personal information will remain strictly confidential according to the National Privacy Principles (NPPs) under the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Information Privacy Act 2000 (Victoria)*. Information will be stored securely and protected from unauthorised access. Personal information will not be disclosed without written consent from the individual involved.

## Signing Children Out

Staff will sign in students upon arrival at the program. When collecting children, the authorised person **must sign out** the child on the sign out sheet. Only individuals identified on a child's enrolment form are authorised to sign them out of the program. Written permission from parents/guardians must be provided for children to be collected by anyone not identified on the enrolment form. Photo ID will need to be shown upon pick up and individuals must be over 18 years of age to collect children. **Under no circumstances will any staff member allow a child to be removed from the centre by an unauthorised person.** If children are not collected by 6pm and every effort has been made to contact parents/guardians, emergency contacts will be called to collect the child. If no contact can be made, the police will be called and the matter will remain with them.

## Late Collection Policy

Children who are not picked up by 6pm will be charged \$2 for each minute they remain at the service. Where a parent/carer arrives at 6pm to pick up the child, \$2 for each minute will be charged after 6.05pm.

## Cancellations and Absences

For normal fee attendances, parents/carers must text or ring the Educational Leader **before 11am** to report an absence. If the child is using NDIS funding to attend the program, at least **24 hours' notice** is required, as outlined in the NDIS Service Agreement. This is a standard cancellation time applicable to all NDIS service users.

## Child Safety and Custody Issues

We have a duty of care to ensure that children are protected whilst attending the program. Child custody arrangements are strictly followed. If there are any custody issues that staff need to be aware of, please notify staff accordingly and provide copies of all legal documents. Any information you provide will be kept completely confidential.

## Fees

Program	Duration	Fee
Sunbury Macedon Ranges Specialist School	3:00pm – 6.00pm	\$45 per day before Centrelink entitlements NDIS funded charged at \$20.24 per hour for low to moderate intensity NDIS funded charged at \$47.20 per hour for higher intensity
Melton Specialist School		

Please note: fees will be reviewed regularly and are subject to change.

### Centrelink Entitlements

All families are eligible for the Child Care Rebate (CCR) and the Child Care Benefit (CCB). The CCR helps working families with the cost of childcare, covering 50% of out-of-pocket child care expenses up to the maximum legislated amount per year per child in approved care. The CCB is a Commonwealth Government subsidy to help make childcare fees more affordable. It is calculated based on a family's income. More information can be found at <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/assistance-with-child-care-fees>.

**You must contact the Family Assistance Office on 13 61 50 and register with them to receive your entitlements.**

When registering with the Family Assistance Office for your benefits, you have the option of paying the full fee and receiving your entitlements at tax time or paying a reduced fee and having your entitlements paid directly to the program. We recommend having your entitlements paid directly to the program to avoid having to lodge a claim at the end of the financial year.

To be eligible for these rebates, you must supply us with the correct date of birth and Customer Reference Number (CRN) of both the child and the claiming parent.

You can estimate your entitlements online at <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/enablers/online-estimators>.

Please note that the New Child Care Package will be starting from July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018. We recommend all families visit [education.gov.au/ChildCarePackage](http://education.gov.au/ChildCarePackage) to find out more about what this will mean for their family.

### Funding

Families that receive respite support through an ISP, NDIS plan or other agreement may use this funding to cover the costs of the program. Please contact the Educational Leader for more information on setting this up.

### Payment Procedure

Accounts are issued each Monday by email. Fees may be paid to the account listed on the invoice or in cash at the Distinctive Options office. Receipts are available upon request.

### Non Payment of Fees

For unpaid fees, a three tier system will be put in to place

1. A reminder email will be sent with a date by which payments must be made. If necessary, a payment plan can be devised between staff and the parent/guardian.
2. A phone call will be made to remind parents/guardians of their obligations and outstanding fees.
3. If two weeks have passed with no payment, the child may be excluded from attending the program until payments are up to date.

## Programming

Our staff are committed to providing an engaging program that supports each student's needs and interests. Our programming aligns with the National Quality Framework and the 'My Time, Our Place' Framework for School Age Care in Australia which targets five developmental outcomes: identity, community, wellbeing, learning and communication.

A variety of structured and unstructured activities will be provided each day, utilising both indoor and outdoor spaces. Activities may include games, construction, music, art, craft, sport, dance, gardening, and cooking. The activities planned are designed to encourage participation of all children regardless of age, gender, cultural background and ability. We appreciate that some children may need to relax and unwind after school and therefore we have areas available for children to withdraw when needed.

### Staffing

We follow a ratio of 1 staff : 4 children which can be increased or decreased depending on children's needs. Staff members hold relevant qualifications in accordance with the National Quality Framework. The name of the person responsible for the service will be on display each day.

### What to Bring

Children should have the following items when attending the program:

- Food to eat during snack time.
- A refillable drink bottle.
- A Sun Smart approved hat for outside play in terms 1 and 4. Children without hats or with inappropriate hats will be restricted to areas that offer protection e.g. indoors, shaded areas, etc.

All belongings should be labelled. Valuables and money should be left at home. The program will not accept any responsibility for lost, damaged or stolen valuable personal possessions brought to the program.

### Food and Nutrition

Parents/guardians are required to provide children with food to be eaten by children at the program. Parents/guardians are encouraged to provide children with healthy, nutritious snacks based on the current *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia (2003)*. We encourage you to provide children with a separate lunch box to be used by children at the program.

Parents/guardians should ensure food provided is nut-free and avoids foods that anaphylactic children at the program are allergic to.

Children should bring their own refillable water bottle. Drinking water will be provided and available at all times.

Cooking activities are also included in program planning as part of children's snacks. During cooking activities, food allergies and dietary requirements will be catered for as requested in enrolment forms and in consultation between staff and parents/guardians. If a child begins a special diet or develops an allergy after they have been enrolled, parents/guardians must advise staff and update the child's enrolment form.

Any food provided at the program is prepared, handled and stored to the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991. Staff model food safety to assist with hygiene and food handling education for children.

## **Standards of Behaviour**

For the program to be run smoothly and safely, we expect that all families and children will act in a safe and sensible manner. Distinctive Options understands that working with children with an intellectual and/or cognitive impairment brings additional challenges relating to communication and behaviour.

Children are encouraged to be respectful of others, use appropriate and positive language and listen to others when they are speaking.

Staff will provide positive guidance to encourage children to make safe choices (e.g. 'walk inside' rather than 'don't run'). Individual behaviour plans may be set up where appropriate in conjunction with children, parents/guardians and staff. If a child's behaviour is putting themselves, other children and/or staff in danger, they may be excluded from the program.

## **Medical and Emergency Management**

### **Medical Conditions**

To ensure the best possible care for all children, we ask that families communicate with us regarding medical concerns and provide any relevant details that will assist us in providing a safe and informed environment.

Staff have been trained to recognise the symptoms of an asthma attack and allergic or anaphylaxis reactions and have current training in the use of asthma medications and auto-injection devices. For children diagnosed with asthma, anaphylaxis or diabetes, a completed copy of the child's management plan must be provided to staff before the child can attend the program. Asthma management forms can be downloaded from [www.asthma.org.au](http://www.asthma.org.au). Anaphylaxis action plans can be downloaded from [www.allergyfacts.org.au](http://www.allergyfacts.org.au). Diabetes management plans can be downloaded from [www.diabetesvic.org.au](http://www.diabetesvic.org.au). Parents and staff may further develop a risk minimisation plan and communications plan for children with these medical conditions.

Families with a child diagnosed with a different medical condition must complete the Medical Management, Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan found in the enrolment form.

### **Medication**

Medication will only be administered where parents/guardians have completed a *Medication Authority Form* and provided it to staff in advance. This includes over the counter medication. Medication must be in its original package or in a blister pack with the child's name, doctor's name, dosage and times written on it. We recommend speaking with your pharmacist about the best option for your child. All medication will be stored in a clearly labelled container out of children's reach.

### **Accidents/Illness/Trauma**

Staff will have a first aid kit nearby at all times. A first aid kit will be taken with staff when children are playing outdoors.

All accidents and illnesses and the treatment given for these will be recorded. Parents or guardians of children who have had an accident or been unwell may be notified by phone and will be asked to sign the record of the incident when collecting their child.

In the case of an emergency where staff are able to adequately treat a child, the closest staff member with a current First Aid Certificate will provide the appropriate care.

If a child becomes unwell or suffers a serious injury, the parent or guardian will be contacted to pick up the child. If no parent or guardian is able to be contacted, emergency contacts will be called. The child will be made comfortable and separated from the other children until they are collected.

In the case of an emergency where staff are not able to adequately treat the child and the child's wellbeing is at risk, an ambulance will be called and parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. The cost of the ambulance or any medical expenses will be covered by the child's family. Staff will not transport children in their own vehicles under any circumstances.

### Infectious Diseases Exclusion

Children with an infectious disease are excluded from the program and are not permitted to attend until they have satisfied conditions to return (refer to infectious diseases exclusion table below). If children display symptoms of an infectious disease whilst at the program, parents/guardians will be contacted and the child will be sent home. Where there is an occurrence of an infectious disease, parents will be informed by means of a notice at the program.

### Emergency and Evacuation

Program staff will follow emergency and evacuation procedures set out by the school. The procedures can be viewed in the policies and procedures manual available from the program.

Emergency procedures and evacuation plans are clearly displayed at all exits of the service.

Staff and children practice emergency procedures every three months.

### Infectious Diseases Exclusion Table

Condition	Exclusion of Cases	Exclusion of Contacts
<b>Amoebiasis (Entamoeba histolytica)</b>	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.	Not excluded.
<b>Campylobacter</b>	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.	Not excluded.
<b>Chickenpox</b>	Exclude until all blisters have dried.	Any child with an immune deficiency or receiving chemotherapy.
<b>Conjunctivitis</b>	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased.	Not excluded.
<b>Diarrhoea</b>	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.	Not excluded.
<b>Diphtheria</b>	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received.	Family/household contacts.
<b>Hand, Foot and Mouth disease</b>	Exclude until all blisters have dried.	Not excluded.
<b>Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)</b>	Exclude until at least 4 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed.	Not excluded
<b>Hepatitis A</b>	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness.	Not excluded.
<b>Herpes (cold sores)</b>	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible.	Not excluded.
<b>Impetigo (school sores)</b>	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing.	Not excluded.
<b>Influenza and influenza like illnesses</b>	Exclude until well.	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary.
<b>Leprosy</b>	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary.	Not excluded.

<b>Measles</b>	Exclude until at least 4 days after onset of rash.	Unimmunised contacts excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case.
<b>Meningitis (bacteria - other than meningococcal meningitis)</b>	Exclude until well.	Not excluded.
<b>Meningococcal infection</b>	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed.	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy.
<b>Mumps</b>	Exclude 9 days or until swelling goes down.	Not excluded.
<b>Pertussis (whooping cough)</b>	Exclude 21 days after onset of the cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment.	Those aged less than 7 years who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment.
<b>Poliomyelitis</b>	Exclude until at least 14 days from onset and a medical certificate of recovery is received.	Not excluded.
<b>Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)</b>	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.	Not excluded.
<b>Rubella (german measles)</b>	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash.	Not excluded.
<b>Salmonella, Shigella</b>	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.	Not excluded.
<b>Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)</b>	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced.	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary.
<b>Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)</b>	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well.	Not excluded.
<b>Tuberculosis</b>	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious.	Not excluded.
<b>Typhoid and paratyphoid fever</b>	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary.	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary.
<b>Verotoxin producing Escherichia coli (VTEC)</b>	Exclude if required by the Secretary and only for the period specified by the Secretary	Not excluded
<b>Worms (intestinal)</b>	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.	Not excluded.