



**Capital  
Region  
Community  
Services**

**School Age Care  
Handbook**

## Introduction - All About CRCS

Welcome! Thank you for taking the first step towards joining us at Capital Region Community Services (CRCS). This is an introduction to School Age Care Programs and for more detailed information on enrolments please contact us on 62640200 or email [csat@crs.com.au](mailto:csat@crs.com.au). We're also on Facebook with daily updates of our activities and you can visit our website [crs.com.au](http://crs.com.au)!

Capital Region Community Services (CRCS) is a regional community service established in 1975 by the people of Belconnen. Formerly known as Belconnen Community Service (BCS), CRCS provides a wide range of high quality, integrated and inclusive programs and services to individuals including older people, people with a disability, families, children and young people in the Capital Region. CRCS provides services to a wide variety of community members including people from non-English speaking backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait people.

CRCS fosters strong relationships with the community, government and other community services, enhancing our capacity to achieve our vision of inclusive, connected communities across the Capital Region.

CRCS is overseen by a Board of Directors and managed by a Chief Executive Officer, with the support of an executive management team. The Governance structure includes a Budget and Finance Committee, a Risk and Compliance Committee, and Innovation and Research Committee. The Board and its committees ensure accountability to the members, community, funders, and ultimately to all participants engaged with CRCS services.

CRCS offers a wide range of supports and services including:

- Child, Youth and Family Support services
- Art, sport and recreation programs
- Early Education and Care and Outside School Hours Care
- Housing and homelessness supports
- Disability programs
- Mental health programs
- Belconnen Community Centre
- Community Transport
- Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)
- Aged Care Packages (ACP)
- Community Assistance and Support Program (CASP)

## CRCS Strategic Plan 2020-2030

### *Our Vision*

Inclusive, connected communities within the Capital Region

### *Our Purpose*

To empower people to live their best life through

- building and connecting communities
- delivering relevant, person-centred services
- providing choice and opportunity

### *Our Values*

- We are **ethical**
- We are **respectful**
- We are **accountable**
- We are **optimistic**
- We are **inclusive**
- We are **innovative**

### *Our Philosophy*

Our Philosophy is that every child's day needs to be filled with both fun and learning opportunities. Our School Age Program is complimentary to the child's school day, where a balanced approach to leisure skills and creative thinking is supported. We believe that strong partnerships with our host school promotes mutual benefit to our families and children, resulting in the best outcomes for each child. We believe that the collaborative relationships with each family builds a partnership that is essential in maximising opportunities and individual support for each child. We look forward to welcoming you to our program.

## School Age Care Programs

### Charnwood-Dunlop School

Bettington Cct, Charnwood ACT 2615  
Ph: 0408449173 or 62640200 (between 9.30 and 2.00)

Email: aileen.moon@cracs.com.au

Before School Care: Monday-Friday 7.30am-9.00am  
After School Care: Monday –Friday 2.45am-6.00pm  
Vacation Care: Monday-Friday 7.30am-6.00pm

The program is currently licensed for 66 children Preschool to Year 6:

The Charnwood programs operate in various locations of the school. The commencement of the program occurs in the Hall with children then having access to the hall and outdoor environments. Children have the ability to choose their play environments and move freely between spaces. This is inclusive of a separate garden area, where the children participate in creating an edible garden area.

Signing in and out on the Kiosk occurs in the Hall unless otherwise informed. Access is currently just inside the hall upon entry to the left.

### *Meals*

**Before School Care:** The program provides a nutritious breakfast.

**After School Care:** The program provides a nutritious afternoon tea.

**Vacation Care:** The program provides a nutritious morning and afternoon tea and families provide lunches. Lunches must be provided in a clearly labelled lunchbox. Please ensure lunch boxes contain cold packs to keep food at a safe temperature throughout the day. Please avoid using plastic wrap or foil where possible, to support us in sustainable practice.

In the instance of a child's lunch being left at home the program can provide lunch consisting of a sandwich and piece of fruit. However, if this a regular occurrence a fee will be charged.

## Florey Primary School

57 Ratcliffe Crescent Florey  
Ph.: 0401045215 or 62640200 (between 9.30 and 2.00)  
Email: [passing.OM@cracs.com.au](mailto:passing.OM@cracs.com.au)

The program is currently licensed for 59 children preschool to Year 6

The Florey programs operate in various locations of the school. The commencement of the program occurs in the Community Room with children then having access to the hall and outdoor environments.

Children have the ability to choose their play environment and move freely between spaces.

Signing in on the Kiosk occurs in the Community Room unless otherwise informed.

Access is currently via the door from the outside of the school into the Community Room. Please ring the door bell and an educator will provide access.

### *Meals*

**Before School Care:** The program provides a nutritious breakfast.

**After School Care:** The program provides a nutritious afternoon tea.

**Vacation Care:** The program provides a nutritious morning and afternoon tea and families provide lunches. Lunches must be provided in a clearly labelled lunchbox. Please ensure lunch boxes contain cold packs to keep food at a safe temperature throughout the day. Please avoid using plastic wrap or foil where possible, to support us in sustainable practice.

In the instance of a child's lunch being left at home the program can provide lunch consisting of a sandwich and piece of fruit. However, if this a regular occurrence a fee will be charged.

## Child Educator Ratios and Play Spaces

### Ratios

Ratios are in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations and are as follows:

Over 3 Year Olds                      1 educator: 11 children

## Starting at the Program

### Commencement in our program

At CRCS we appreciate the significance of your decision to leave your child in someone else's care. Our educators are very experienced in supporting children and families when settling into the program. For many children, especially for Preschool and Kindergarten children the transition to school can be a significant experience along with the transition to a before or after school care setting. Our educator's escort the preschool children to their classroom at our Before School Program and at our After School Program our educators collect Preschool and Kindergarten children from their respective classroom's.

Please feel free to call us at any time to find out about your child's time with us or to discuss your concerns. It is most effective to take the time in the first few weeks communicating about your child with the educators so we best support children and they feel safe and secure, allowing them to develop a sense of confidence in their new learning environment. You can structure these conversations around drop off and pick up or via phone and email during the day.

During orientation visits, we will be supporting children's opportunities to experience and develop a sense of trust around play and routine times – such as transitions to and from school and meal times.

We look forward to working closely with you to make this important step as smooth as possible. You can assist this process by:

- Being prepared to spend extra time at the program when required during drop off and pick up
- Being confident and positive about educators and the environment
- Always letting educators know that you are leaving so that they can provide extra support if required

### Being Part of Our Community

We value families as children's first teachers. Parents are welcome at the program at any time throughout the operating hours. Additionally, if you or any family members have a special skill or interest we welcome you to come into the program and share this with our educators and children.

## Legislation

### National Quality Framework

The National Quality Framework includes:

- a national legislative framework that consists of the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- a National Quality Standard
- an assessment and rating system
- a regulatory authority in each state and territory (CECA-Children's Education and Care Assurance) who will have primary responsibility for the approval, monitoring and quality assessment of services in their jurisdiction in accordance with the national legislative framework and in relation to the National Quality Standard
- the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).  
ACECQA, the new national body is responsible for providing oversight of the new system and ensuring consistency of approach.

### Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) is an independent national authority that assists governments in administering the [National Quality Framework](#) (NQF) for children's education and care.

ACECQA works with the Australian and state and territory governments to:

- implement changes that benefit children birth to 13 years of age and their families
- monitor and promote the consistent application of the [Education and Care Services National Law](#) across all states and territories
- support the children's education and care sector to improve quality outcomes for children.

ACECQA is an independent national authority based in Sydney. It is guided by a governing [Board](#) whose members are nominated by each state and territory and the Commonwealth. The Board is accountable to the [Education Council](#).

For more information please visit <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

### Children's Education and Care Assurance

The Children's Education and Care Assurance (CECA) is the ACT's Regulatory Authority for the education and care sector. CECA exercise the powers of the ACT Regulatory Authority under the Education and Care Services National Law (the National Law).

Section 260 of the National Law specifies the functions of the Regulatory Authority. They are:

- to assess services against the National Quality Standard and determine the ratings of those services;
- to monitor and enforce compliance;
- to receive and investigate complaints arising under the Law;

- to educate and inform education and care services and the community about the National Quality Framework;
- to work in collaboration with ACECQA to support and promote continuous quality improvements

Section 3 of the National Law then sets out objectives and guiding principles that apply to these functions. Objectives significant to CECA's functions include:

- to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending education and care services;
- to improve the educational and developmental outcomes for children attending education and care services; and
- to promote continuous improvement in the provision of quality education and care services.

Guiding principles significant to CECA's function include:

- that the rights and best interests of the child are paramount; and
- that best practice is expected in the provision of education and care services

For more information please visit

[https://www.education.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/1186387/CECA-Education-and-Engage-Compliance-Framework.pdf](https://www.education.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1186387/CECA-Education-and-Engage-Compliance-Framework.pdf)

## **My Time Our Place Framework**

The Capital Region Community Services Education and Care Program's philosophy, curriculum and practices come from the beliefs and values of all educators and influences and understandings from Theorists. The Program's curriculum is based on the My Time Our Place Framework for Australia (MTOF).

This Framework has been developed to ensure children receive quality education programs in our school age care settings. The Framework's vision is for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life.

The My Time Our Place Framework has been designed for use by school age care educators working in partnership with children, their families and the community, including schools. It represents Australia's first national framework for school age care to be used by school age care educators, and aims to extend and enrich children's wellbeing and development in school age care settings.

This Framework is linked to the Early Years Learning Framework which focuses on children from birth to five years. It extends the principles, practices and outcomes to the contexts and age range of the children and young people who attend school age care settings.

Further, the National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care supports the implementation of this national framework by ensuring that necessary environments, facilities, staffing arrangements, resources and management structures are in place. It also describes the principles, practices and outcomes as essential to supporting and enhancing learning from birth to five years of age along with a focus on their transition to school

The Framework has a strong emphasis on play and leisure based learning as play is the best means for young child's learning. The Framework also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

The Learning Outcomes of the Framework:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected with & contribute to their world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators

Learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when educators work in partnership with families. Partnerships are based on the foundations of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes, and building on the strength of each other's knowledge.

Working in partnership with families, educators use the Learning Outcomes to guide their planning for children's learning. In order to engage children actively in learning, educators identify children's strengths and interests, choose appropriate teaching strategies and design the learning environment.

Educators carefully assess learning to inform further planning. Educators' practices and the relationships they form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in learning. Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning.

## Our Commitments

### Reconciliation Practices

CRCS acknowledges that our programs take place on traditional Aboriginal land. We pay our respects and share knowledge with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island community to enhance and guide our practices.

CRCS has an official Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and a working group.

The RAP Working Group's mission is to ensure that CRCS finds ways to further acknowledge the discrimination experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to build relationships, respect and care for our country ensure that our services are both visible to, and inclusive of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

### Sustainability Practices

At CRCS we are passionate about embedding opportunities for children to explore, experience and engage in sustainable practices.

As the need for greater sustainability becomes more apparent globally, so does the importance of embedding sustainability in children's programs. Through hands-on experiences and relevant educator pedagogies, children can explore and learn about their local contexts and environmental

issues. They can develop the creativity and critical thinking skills necessary to make informed decisions for change, improving the quality of their lives, and those of future generations. Practicing sustainability empowers children to construct knowledge, explore values and develop an appreciation of the environment and its relationship to their worlds. This lays the foundations for an

### **Child Safety and Wellbeing**

Capital Region Community Services acknowledges its responsibility to uphold and promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and to respect and listen to the opinions of the children and young people in our care.

We recognise the importance of developing and implementing systems, which protect children and young people from risk of harm, and fostering a culture of safeguarding children and young people.

The Board Chair, CEO and educators have all signed a Statement of Commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

### **Social Responsibilities**

CRCS programs will provide a secure, caring and stimulating environment, which encourages children to co-operate, enhance their self-esteem and interact positively with others. Educators promote the use of proactive strategies to encourage socially acceptable and age appropriate behaviours in children. They will role model positive behaviours when engaging with children. Social learning strategies will at all times maintain the dignity and rights of the child. No child will receive any form of physical, verbal or emotional punishment. The vocabulary used will be respectful, professional and to a child's understanding.

CRCS expects that families/guardians who wish to support their child's social learning whilst in the program will not at any time use any form of abuse or unacceptable language.

The team of Educators and the Nominated Supervisor is available to discuss and assist with any concern a family member may have in respect of a child's behaviour or participation in the program. If a child shows consistent behaviour concerns the Nominated Supervisor will work with the family/guardian to develop plan for guiding the behaviour and assist the family/ guardian to seek advice and support if required.

## **Supporting Children**

### **Inclusion Support**

Children have varying needs, strengths and abilities, sometimes require additional support in certain areas. Extra support, such as additional educators, required equipment, changes to the curriculum and environment may be necessary to ensure we provide an inclusive environment for a child. An Inclusion Support Application may be required for children to ensure the educators are trained and the environment is safe to facilitate children's inclusion. This ensures children's experiences at the program are positive from the time of enrolment. This will be discussed and permission must be granted from the family prior to seeking external support

### **Positive Behavior Guidance Plans**

Our programs strive to provide positive, relationship-based behavior guidance to support children. Educators utilise Circle of Security Practices, and ensure that they are modelling positive pro-social behaviours to children. We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication young children and aim to be responsive to the needs which behaviour may indicate. It is quite normal for all children to engage in disruptive behaviour at times, however there are times when

disruptive behaviour may create or indicate a concern about the health, safety or wellbeing of the child or their peers.

Educators at the program will access support from external agencies for guidance in ensuring the child's needs are met. If your child's behaviour in a given moment poses a risk to themselves or others, educators may contact you and ask you to collect your child within the hour. If you cannot return within the hour you must notify us of suitable alternative arrangements.

We will, at all times, endeavor to work with families to support children's pro-social behaviour, however if disruptive behaviour which poses a risk to the child or others continues and educators feel that there is no further support available, the program reserves the right to ask a family to find alternative permanent child care arrangements. The Family will be given 2 weeks' notice to find alternate care

*Please refer to our 'Children's Programs Positive Behaviour Guidance Policy and Procedure'.*

## Arrival and Departure

### Attendance Records

All attendance records must be verified and electronically signed by a child's parent/guardian where appropriate including signing as verification of the days that your child was absent, as per *A New Tax System (Parent/guardian Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999* and in the *Child Care Benefit (Record Keeping) Rules 2000*.

### Reporting Sign In / Out Times - Kiosk

From 14 January 2019, it is a legal requirement for child care providers such as CRCS to include children's actual attendance times in statements of entitlement to families and session reports to the Australian Government. Reporting actual attendance times is intended to help parents understand the relationship between the fees they are charged, the amount of subsidy paid to their child care provider on their behalf, and their out of pocket expenses. As such, account holders must use the Kiosk system implemented at all CRCS CP to sign their child in and out of their enrolled service.

In the event of an emergency, and for Child Care Subsidy (CCS) purposes, the program needs to know which children are present. **All parents must sign their children in and out** each day in the **Online Kiosks** which are located in each room. Please sign in as you actually arrive not when you leave. This will ensure that real-time data is communicated electronically via the kiosk to the administration office and to the Department of Human Resources. In the event there are technology/internet issues, paper rolls will be provided for signing in and out. In the event a family member has not signed their child in or out, educators will complete this on the kiosk. Family members will then receive a notification on the kiosk when they next arrive at the program requesting confirmation and times their child attended the previous day.

The programs have a Key Pad Entry Device as a security measure, so that the front doors of the Program are **always** locked. We will issue you with the Pin Code which **MUST NOT** under any circumstances be given to extended parent/guardian members or friends and is for Parents, Guardians or Permanent Carers only. If you need to have your child collected by someone other than yourselves, the person must announce themselves at the intercom or press the door bell and wait for an educator to attend to them. There will be on occasions a need to change the code and this will generally occur at the discretion of the Director. Please also be aware when

entering the Program that other people do not “tailgate” and gain entry at the same time that you have opened the doors for yourself. The Pin Code Entry will be disabled outside of operating hours. Pin Codes for the programs are provided on orientation.

When arriving with your child please ensure you have spoken with an educator so they are aware you and your child have arrived (never leave your child without informing an educator). During this time you can discuss with educators any circumstances likely to require attention that day or that may affect the behaviour of the child e.g. visitor at home, parent/guardian member away, late night out, etc.

It is very important that parents and guardians inform educators when they are leaving with their child. During this time educators can give you a brief summary of your child’s day and discuss anything special that may have happened.

### Collection of Children

For the safety and wellbeing of our children, only parents/guardians and those given written permission by parents/guardians are allowed to collect children. **All persons named on the enrolment form or updated Authorisation to Collect form may collect the children at any time even without notification from parents and carers. We do however prefer to be informed if anyone other than the person dropping the child off is collecting the child at the end of the day.**

If circumstances change during the day, please email through the name of the alternate collector, including the full name, address, and phone number of this person. Unless in an emergency or extenuating circumstance we are unable to take this information verbally. If we have not been notified of an “alternative collector” and the person wishing to collect your child is NOT nominated on your enrolment form to pick up, we will contact parents/guardians where we will ask to seek written permission. If educators are unsure of the identity of the person collecting, identification will be requested.

**The account holder holds primary responsibility of the child’s enrolment. The account holder is the person to which the Child Care Subsidy is linked to. Regulation 99 stipulates: In this regulation *parent* does not include a parent who is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child.**

**Only people over 18 years of age are permitted to collect and sign children out unless discussed with the director.**

*Please refer to our ‘Children’s Programs Authorisation of Collection of Children Policy and Procedure’*

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## Bookings and Fees

Each financial year the Director, Executive Manager of Children's Programs, Executive Manager Business and Infrastructure and the CRCS Board review the preceding year's budget and draws up a new one for the following financial year.

Fees for all programs may increase annually. This is to ensure we can invest back into our programs, keep up with the increase of costs including wages, compliance and quality improvement.

Parents/guardians will be informed of any fee increases with a minimum of 4 weeks' notice.

### My Family Lounge

CRCS has an online Booking and Waitlist management program called QK Enrol. This program will give you access to manage your own account information, where you will have the ability to make bookings requests and allow you to complete and submit an online enrolment form for your child. You can do this and much, much more all within a parent portal called 'My Family Lounge'.

You will also have the flexibility of booking in casual days and report absences for your child straight from your phone with just a few taps by downloading the My Family Lounge APP!

### What can I do in My Family Lounge?

As a NEW family, you can easily register your child's details and manage your account information. Simply go to the Capital Region Community Services Website, select the Early Childhood Centre Link and navigate to the **How To Register** link on the page:

<https://www.crcs.com.au/programs-and-services/childcare/>

### Invoicing

All families who have a child/children who attend a CRCS CP must be invoiced for each day the child/children are enrolled. Childcare invoices are distributed to families fortnightly either by mail or e-mail. The preferred method of distribution for invoices is e-mail.

### Claiming CCS

The Family Assistance Legalisation Act and Jobs for Families Child Care Package stipulates that a family using an approved child care service should complete an application for the Child Care Subsidy. CRCS will create a Complying Written Agreement (or enrolment) when the enrolment commences and send the booking information to the account holders MyGov Account. Should DHS determine a family eligible for the CCS, the account holder should logon to their MyGov account and "confirm" their booking with CRCS for the CCS discount to be applied directly to the account holders invoice. NB: DHS do not currently backdate CCS payments to an account holder's invoice; therefore it is recommended that the account holder complete this process prior to the enrolment commencing to avoid being liable for paying full fees

### Payment Methods

Direct Debit from a bank account, or Direct Credit from a Visa or MasterCard are the preferred methods of payment. All accounts established on Direct Debit require either Direct Credit or Direct Debit authority. Direct Debits/Credits are run on Thursdays as per the Direct Debit/Credit authority.

Payments that dishonour are subject to a dishonour fee. BCS also accepts B-PAY or Direct Deposit payments

## Public Holidays

Our centres are closed on public holidays. There will be no charges on these days.

## Cessation of Care

DHS legislation states if a child is absent from the service for their last booked day, and any consecutive days leading up until their final day of care, CCS will not be applied and full fee charges will apply. This can take up to eight weeks to process with the department. If the enrolment has ceased and a debt is incurred after the booking ends date, BCS maintains the right to pursue the arrears balance outlined in this policy.

## Stand Down Periods

CRCS will not charge for stand down periods, including the Christmas/New Year stand down period and the annual designated CP Professional Development Day.

*Please refer to the 'Fees in Children's Programs Policy and Procedure'*

## Child Care Subsidy

Family Assistance by way of discounts towards your fees is available for eligible families. If you would like to access this assistance please speak with the Children's Services Admin Team and provide them with:

- Your Customer Reference Number (CRN issued to you by the Family Assistance Office)
- Your child's Customer Reference Number (issued to you by the Family Assistance Office)
- Your date of birth (CRN Holder) and
- Your child's date of birth

This information will be provided to and validated against Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations records to determine if you are eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS). If you do not have a CRN please contact the Department of Human Services (Centrelink). You must have registered for the Child Care Subsidy to receive this benefit.

## Bookings

Please provide the Admin Team with your request in writing two weeks in advance if you would like to change your child's regular day/s. We will endeavour to accommodate your request to the best of our ability. Please note: programs do not swap 'booked days'. If you require another day it will be an additional day charged. Our admin team can be contacted on 02 6264 0200 or via [csat@crccs.com.au](mailto:csat@crccs.com.au)

## Ceasing Childcare or Reducing Days

We require a minimum of 2 weeks' notice in writing if you wish to withdraw your child from care. **ACCOUNTS MUST BE FINALISED TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR FINISHING DATE.** If your account is in arrears your child may not be able to attend childcare for the time following your written notice. If this notice is not provided the equivalent of two weeks fees must be paid prior to the child leaving the Program. If you choose for your child **NOT** to attend the last 2 weeks, you will be

charged the **FULL FEE, NO CHILD CARE SUBSIDY CAN OR WILL APPLY**, as per Section 10 of *A New Tax System (Parent/guardian Assistance) ACT 1999*.

**Once your final 2 weeks' notice has been provided your child must attend care on their last booked day to ensure you receive any CCS you are entitled to**

### Late Collection and Fees

Capital Region Community Services adopts a zero tolerance policy on late collection of your child from any Capital Region Community Services child care program.

If you are late due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. parent/guardian emergency), please contact the program immediately.

In circumstances where parents/guardians have been late on repeat occasions, the Executive Manager Children's Programs can cease care effective immediately.

If a child is not collected by 6.00pm, with no previous contact, educators will endeavour to call parents and emergency contact by phone. If no one can be contacted at this time, educators will contact Child and Youth Protective Services (ACT Government) and the Police so the children may be placed in other appropriate care. *Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Late Collection and Abandonment of a Child Policy and Procedure'*

### Absences from the Program

#### Informing the Program

Please ensure that if your child will be absent from the program you contact the Director or Admin Team via phone or email. Our Policy for children not arriving at After School Care details that we will phone the nominated contacts on the enrolment form and make contact with the school to confirm the child attended that day. **If a child did attend school and we cannot make contact with the family we will be contacting the Police as we deem the child to be missing.**

#### Centrelink

Centrelink allows 42 absent days per financial year in which a family may receive CCS entitlements. Once a family has reached 42 absent days for the financial year, CCS eligibility is not applicable and payment of the full daily rate will apply for any additional absent days. In the event a child is suffering a long term illness or condition, an additional 20 absent days may be approved with a supporting medical certificate for each individual absent day. In addition to the absent day rule, all children will have 42 absent days to utilise during the financial year. Where a family have shared care arrangements, it is critical to stipulate that the 42 days are linked to the child and not per account holder.

We understand that sometimes due to illness, vacation or other reasons children need to have time away from the program. Please let us know if your child will not be attending on any given day. If your child is absent you will need to sign via the kiosk indicating your child has been absent when next arriving at the program. We recommend you provide documentation to support absence days, such as Medical Certificates.

### Additional Absence Days

You may receive CCS for absence days after the initial 42 days each financial year. For all absences beyond the first 42 absent days, CCS will only be paid if you are able to provide evidence to demonstrate the absence has occurred under permitted circumstances. There is no limit on these days but you will be required to provide documentation to support the absence. Public holidays cannot be claimed as additional absence days.

## Health and Hygiene

We are committed to minimising the risk of transmission of infectious diseases by quickly and effectively responding to a suspected or identified infectious disease or illness.

To ensure your child is comfortable, and to ensure the health of other children and our team of educators, if they are unwell alternate alternative arrangements for their care must be made. If your child is showing signs of an illness or infectious disease while in our care, we will contact you and request that you collect your child.

### Illness at the Programs

Educators will contact parents if their child becomes ill at the Program so that they can be taken home or to the doctor. The parent must collect their child as soon as possible and within the hour after initial contact or advise the Program of other arrangements.

If a child is excluded at the first sign of illness and kept at home until completely recovered, cross infection will be kept to a minimum and the likelihood of re-infection or further illness for that child is reduced. Please ensure that you have either phoned the program or sent an email *Please refer to the "Children's Programs Health Policy and Procedure"*

### Immunisation

It is CRCS policy, and in keeping with the ACT Immunisation Requirements that not all children attending the Program must be immunised.

To prevent the spread of infectious diseases we encourage parents/guardians to fully immunise their children in accordance with the Department of Health and Ageing National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule. For those children immunised, parents/guardians are required to bring proof of their child's immunisation status when completing enrolment forms and after every subsequent immunisation update. For children who cannot be immunised for medical reasons, the program requires a letter from the Doctor stating the reason for this. Parents/guardians who object to immunising their children must sign a conscientious objection letter stating this. Children who are not immunised or whose immunisation records are not up to date will be excluded during an outbreak of a communicable disease until proof of immunisation is sighted.

Reminders to Families to provide records of their child's immunisation will be provided through Newsletters and Transition Information. The current immunisation schedule can be obtained from the programs. *Please refer to the "Children's Programs Immunisation Policy and Procedure"*

### Medication

Educators at all programs understand the importance of reducing the risk of cross infection when children and educators are ill at the program. There may be times when a child becomes unwell and families have been informed from the doctor that they may need to be administered

medication. Educators are aware of the implications and needs of administering medication to children when at the program.

Educators at the program will only administer **prescribed medications**. However the child must not return to the program until 24 hours after the initial dose. Educators will **not** administer “over the counter medications” such as but not limited to ibuprofen, paracetamol, antihistamines unless prescribed with labelled information on the bottle or a letter from the doctor. The letter must state: who the medication is for; what the medication is for, the dosage of the medication, how long and when to administer the medication.

Families are required to complete a short or long term medication form pending on the longevity of the medication

If your child requires medication for an elevated temperature, pain relief, or any other reason before attending childcare they **must not attend**.

For the protection of all who attend our program, we must exclude children who present with signs and symptoms of an infectious disease, including but not limited to:

- fever;
- vomiting;
- diarrhea;
- unexplained aches/pains/lethargy;
- infected discharge from eyes, nose or ears;
- continual discharge from the nose;
- unable to be comforted;
- unexplained rashes.

***Please do not leave medication in bags or on benches.***

Please ensure children are aware they have medication in their bags that needs to be provided to an educator when arriving at after school care. Directors can also be emailed so they are aware to remind the children.

Parents are also responsible for collecting medication at pick up time however educators are happy to put reminder notes on the kiosk.

Medication is kept in specific locations at each program to ensure that children do not have access, and it will be stored in accordance with the instructions and label.

*Please refer to our 'Children's Programs Medication Policy and Procedure'*

### **Returning to the program after illness**

When your child returns to the program after an illness please ensure that you see an educator, so that further requirements for medication can be established and the child's condition can be assessed.

Parents/guardians need to consider their child's ability to cope in a group setting, involving the normal indoor/outdoor program before allowing the child to return to the program.

A child **must not** return to the program until 24 hours after the first dose of a course of antibiotics, or 48 hours after the last bout of vomiting or diarrhea.

Even if a medical certificate is produced, the program retains the right to exclude children regarded by the Nominated Supervisor, Responsible Person in Day to Day Charge or Lead Educator as unwell or unable to cope with the program.

Exclusion regulations are listed in the 'staying healthy in childcare manual' located at each program.

These specific guidelines are for the exclusion of sick children and educators at the programs. These guidelines must be adhered to however some exclusions may vary. Please speak with the program Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person in Day to Day Charge if required

*The CRCS exclusions for hand, foot and mouth disease, vomiting and diarrhea and cold sores are different than those guidelines issued by staying healthy in childcare. The educators believe that cross infection of children in a group setting can be prevented by early exclusion from the program.*

Any possible outbreak will be reported to act health and recommendations followed. We will also advise you of any infectious disease in the program (whilst maintaining confidentiality) by placing notices in the programs and/or by contacting parents/guardians by phone or email.

### Medical Management Plans

All children with a medical condition including but not limited to conditions such as asthma, allergies and intolerances, or anaphylaxis must provide the program with a signed Action Plan from a Medical Practitioner (documented on the appropriate Action Plan template) and their required medication, e.g. Auto Immune Injector (epipen/anapen), Asthma medication, etc. All medication provided must be 'in date', in the original packaging, and with a prescription label including the child's name. **Children cannot attend the program if their child does not have their medication stated in their management plan, the medication plan is more than 12 months old or if medication is out of date.**

Families are required to complete a Long Term Medication Form and sign and sign a Risk Management Plan

## Child Safe Environment

### Child Protection (Mandatory Reporting)

Children have the right to be free from harm and to play, learn and be cared for in a safe and secure environment and our educators are committed to the protection and wellbeing of your child.

It is a legal requirement of educators at the program to report any suspected cases of child abuse.

"Child Abuse is the term used to describe different types of maltreatment inflicted on a child or young person. It includes non-incidental physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse, including psychological harm or sexual exploitation of children and young people and requires different and specialised responses".

Section 159 of the "Children and Young People Act 1999" legally requires a person caring for a child at a Child Care Program to report to their Nominated Supervisor when they have formed a reasonable suspicion that a child or young person has suffered sexual abuse or non-incidental physical injury.

*Please refer to the 'Child Protection Policy and Procedure'*

## Early Childhood Code of Ethics

The Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics is a set of statements about appropriate and expected behaviour of members of a professional group.

The Code of Ethics was first developed in 1990 by a national working party, with considerable input from the early child care and education sector. In 2006 the Code of Ethics was reviewed and endorsed by the Early Childhood Australia's National Council.

## Incidents and Injuries

We are committed to creating safe environments for children and our programs are designed to provide a safe but challenging environments according to their developmental levels and needs. Children use play to actively investigate and explore their world. During play children will take risks to build new knowledge, and to understand and to enhance and test their own capabilities. Even though all due care is taken to ensure the safety of children, there may be times when incidents occur at the program.

When an incident occurs educators will administer the required first aid and complete an incident form stating the details of the incident and the injury that occurred. At the end of the day educators will inform parents that their child has had an incident and parents are required to read and sign the incident form. Incident forms will be completed even if there is no visible injury as at times bruises and marks may not appear until later on.

If your child has had a head injury or a serious injury an educator will contact you as soon as possible to inform you of the incident and if required seek medical guidance

Families are also asked to complete an incident injury form on arrival at the program if their child has had an incident and visible injury prior to attending the program to ensure educators are aware that the injury did not occur at the program, and ensure that any injuries to children are monitored appropriately.

## Emergency Medical Treatment

In the case of an incident or emergency resulting in the need for immediate medical attention, the Nominated Supervisor or person in day to day charge will assess the situation, and if life threatening (e.g. severe asthma attack) will call for an ambulance. ***The cost of the ambulance is the responsibility of parents/guardians therefore it is recommended that every Family takes out ambulance insurance.***

If families do not give this consent CRCS reserves the right to suspend the enrolment process  
*Please refer to the "Children's Programs Ambulance Transportation Policy and Procedure"*

For situations that are not life threatening, parents will be notified that their child requires medical attention and they will be given the option of taking their child or calling for an ambulance. Incidents which require immediate medical attention, will also be reported to the Children's Education and Care Assurance (CECA), our Regulatory Authority, to ensure regulatory compliance.

## Program Safety

The Programs each have a Workplace Safety Representative who is responsible for ensuring all hazards are documented, reported and managed. These representatives attend regular meetings to address any Workplace Safety issues and take part in safety inspections bi- annually. Hazards are reported to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to minimize or eliminate risks.

## Gates and Doors

If you go through a door or gate, please shut it behind you. We do have children who abscond from programs and a door that has not been shut is a door through which a child may venture!

## Safety in the Car parks

We ask that all families and children use any available **crossings** in the car parks and use safe road sense, such as holding children's hands in the car parks and avoiding walking behind reversing cars. Young children are still developing road sense and they are difficult to see in a rear-vision mirror, especially at night in the winter months. At NO TIME are children to be left alone in cars while children attending our programs are dropped off or collected.

## Sun Protection

Our policy and procedure is developed with the ACT Cancer Council and curriculum is planned in accordance with our territory and Cancer Council recommendations, as per below:

ACT: Sun protection is necessary for part or most of each day between August to May when Ultra Violet Radiation (UVR) levels reach three and above. Educators will minimise and arrange outdoor activities and events as much as reasonably practicable between 11am–3pm during the daylight saving period.

The programs will endeavour to promote positive attitudes towards skin protection and encourage lifestyle practices that can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer. Educators will reapply sunscreen for afternoon outdoor play, encouraging children to apply their own sunscreen safely as they become older and more confident.

*Please refer to our 'Children's Programs Sun Protection Policy' reviewed by the Cancer Council.*

## Emergency Procedures

The Program is prepared for various possible disasters including bomb threats and fires within the building. Safety routines are reinforced by regular evacuation and lockdown drills which occur every 3 months in accordance with the Education and care National Law and Regulations.

In each program the Chief Fire Warden is the Nominated Supervisor and there are designated educators as Fire Wardens. Parents of children are not permitted to enter the Program if emergency evacuation procedures (drills or actual events) are in progress. Parents/guardians should familiarize themselves with the designated assembly points

## Family Responsibilities

### Up to date contact numbers

It is very distressing for children, educators and parents if we are unable to contact parents when the need arises. If your home or work number changes or if your emergency contact numbers change it is your responsibility to inform the Program immediately. 'Change of Details' forms are available if required.

### During Vacation Care the following items must be provided daily:

- At least one complete change of clothes

- Water bottle
- Wide brimmed hat, bucket style or legionnaires hat with cords removed (August – May)
- Required Medication
- Lunch
- Appropriate Clothing- In order to ensure that children can play and participate in activities safely and comfortably we request that parents bring their children in practical, appropriate play clothes and shoes during their attendance at Vacation Care.
- Footwear- For safety reasons children we recommend children do not wear shoes such as but not limited to thongs, slippers, or crocs at the Program. Footwear must support children's choices to climb, run, jump, and engage in a variety of active movement

We foster children's appreciation and expression through but not limited to creative arts, nature play and water.

### **Naming Belongings**

All children's clothes and possessions must be clearly labelled.

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Appropriate Clothing Policy and Procedure'*

## **Educators**

### **Educators**

We take pride in the quality of educators that we personally choose for our centres, as well as the way we look after, support and appreciate them to ensure their work is constantly of the highest standard. CRCS educators are selected for their knowledge, qualifications, experience, professionalism and love for teaching. They are diverse and interesting people whose backgrounds are reflective of the increasingly multicultural nature of Australia. CRCS educators are supported to develop and obtain further professional qualifications in the field of early education and care. A full list of educators' qualifications and their registration status can be provided upon request.

### **Casual Educators**

The programs endeavor to employ regular relief educators. We understand and value the importance of continuity of care in all rooms and throughout the program.

### **Meetings**

Communication between educators is vital to the running of a quality program. Meetings between Educators and the Nominated Supervisor are held regularly as are full educators meetings. Topics regularly covered include policy, curriculum planning and reflection, pedagogy and practice, compliance and individual children. Meetings are also organised with educators from the other Children's Services Programs within CRCS and the wider Community. This is a great opportunity for educators to network and participate in professional conversations.

## Professional Development

Keeping up with changing attitudes, theories and current best practice is vital to the running of a quality program. All educators regularly participate in a variety of training to learn new skills and ideas.

The program closes one day per year (fees are not charged) for an Educator Professional Development Day.

## Students

From time to time we offer placements at our program to students seeking work experience from various schools, colleges, Registered Training Organisations and universities. We place high value on the importance of supporting emerging early childhood professionals, and provide mentoring, ensuring our students feel welcome and are provided a professional learning environment. Students who share our CRCS values will have opportunities to work further with us, as appropriate to the needs of the programs and students.

## General Information

### Program menus

All programs are 'allergy and culturally friendly' to meet the needs of all children and families avoiding food and ingredients which children may be allergic or intolerant too.

We cater for a variety of dietary needs, including the provision of vegetarian, Halal, and dairy-free options where appropriate. Please keep us informed about your child's dietary needs.

Our menu is developed in consideration of the Australian Dietary Guidelines, family and child feedback, cultural preferences, and seasonal availability. Meal times are an important part of our curriculum and children and families are always welcome to provide suggestions and feedback. All menus provided by the programs are provided to Nutrition Australia for regular assessment.

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Nutrition Policy and Procedure' and the seasonal rotating menus located in your programs.*

### Excursions and Incursions

All programs arrange excursions and incursions throughout the year for the children in the programs. Excursions can include regular outings, and arranged excursions to extend on our curriculum and children's interests.

Incursions may involve community members and visitors to support the curriculum, children's interests and curiosity.

Information about excursions and incursions, and appropriate permission forms will be distributed to families at the time of these events or on commencement.

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Excursion Policy and Procedure'*

### Story Park

Story Park is an easy-to-use private online service that assists educators and families to work together to record, share and extend children's learning.

Educators can capture a child's development by posting photos, videos, stories, moments, notes and responses. Creating a Story park account is quick, easy and free for parents and families.

Story Park is 'child-centric' which means any account must be connected to a child's profile. You will receive a Story park invitation as part of orientation, including permission and privacy information prior to inviting family members to be part of that profile.

### **Celebrations**

We recognise that celebrating special occasions is important to our children, families and educators. We love to help you and your child celebrate special moments and occasions whether they are birthdays, starting a new school or welcoming a new baby to the family, or community or cultural celebration or event. If you would like us to be part of any cultural event or festival please let us know and discuss them with your child's educator.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are special days and we love to celebrate them with your child. Cupcakes or other special food such as ice-blocks in summer may be provided if you wish. We ask that you provide cupcakes instead of a whole cake to minimise the spread of droplet infection, that cakes are nut-free, and a list of ingredients or the cake packaging so that we can ensure that all children are catered for. Candles can be placed on your child's cupcake. Educators are happy to take photographs and email them to families. Please discuss arrangements with educators. Please refrain from bringing lollies, chips and other junk food.

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Nutrition Policy and Procedure', our 'Children's Programs Anaphylaxis Policy and Procedure', and the 'Children's Programs Child Safe Environment Policy and Procedure'.*

### **Program Events**

Throughout the year the programs organise special events for the children and their parents/guardians. Events include breakfasts, a Christmas party, incursions, family/educator interviews and times when family members such as grandparents and godparents and special friends can attend. Dates for these events are in the emails, Story Park and notes near the kiosks.

## **Family Involvement and Communication**

We believe that a strong and healthy relationship between educators and Families can strengthen a child's sense of belonging, well-being and ecology-focusing on the reciprocal relationships. Therefore we ask that when educators ask for your involvement into the curriculum please take the time to do so. Educators also believe children should be educated together and recognise that necessary social, emotional and cultural developments are more likely to occur in an integrated environment.

Parents are kept up to date with curriculum developments by day-to-day discussions, by the weekly curriculum displayed in each room, and via our online documentation app – Story Park. If you have any ideas, suggestions or special skills or time to put into our program please don't hesitate in letting us know. You best know your child and their interests and we welcome your expertise to broaden the range of experiences we offer.

Parent feedback is invaluable to us and is a good measure of the quality of service. If a parent has any feedback or would like to address an issue, please do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the educator concerned or the Nominated Supervisor. If you feel uncomfortable with this, the Program has a process for providing feedback.

*Please refer to our 'CRCS Feedback Policy and Procedure'.*

We also welcome any information you can give us about your child, as this will help us to effectively support your child's play and learning.

As working and studying parents, we understand that you are busy people. To keep you informed on the day-to-day activities of the Program, there are various strategies and procedures in place to provide for regular communication.

- Educators are always there to greet you and your child on entering your child's room. Please feel free to talk to educators about your child's day so far.
- In each room you will find weekly curriculums which families are more than welcome to discuss or contribute to.
- You will be invited to Story Park and have access to a digital portfolio of your child's learning and development. We strongly encourage families to comment on these documents.
- At the end of each session educators will discuss your child's day with you.
- Regular emails are provided to Families containing specific Program information. Please take the time to read these as they are of importance and keep you informed of what is happening at the program.
- Opportunities to have one on one meetings with educators are available throughout the year. This provides Families with the opportunity to meet one on one with educators to discuss their child's development and any other issues that you would like to discuss.
- Please feel free to meet with educators at any time regarding any queries.

Please note: Communication strategies may vary between programs.

### **Public Concerns about Child Care**

Childrens Education and Care Assurance (CECA) is obliged to respond to all concerns from the public about children's services. The primary concern at all times is the well-being of children in care.

If you have any concerns you can contact CECA on **6207 1114**.

### **Child Related Information**

Programs provide and maintain current information relating to child safety, community events, development and other, child rearing and other related information. These are available at the programs on request and are communicated via Story Park or email at various times throughout the year.

### **Policies / Procedures**

The policy manual is available for your perusal and copies are available on request. Policies are continually under review and parents/guardians are asked to be involved in this process. Policies and procedures that are due for review will be emailed to parents/guardians asking for any feedback. Please provide all feedback to [policy@crs.com.au](mailto:policy@crs.com.au)

CRCS has a Senior Manager of Organisational Development Quality and Assurance Officer who assists the Executive Manager of Children’s Programs in the review and development of policies, procedures and safe work guidelines.

Families will be informed of policies under review via email and Story Park and families will receive 2 weeks’ notice in writing of any changes to policies and procedures. If you are interested in assisting with Policy reviews please speak with the Nominated Supervisor.

## Useful Contacts

Childrens Services Admin team 62640200  
[csat@crsact.com.au](mailto:csat@crsact.com.au)

Capital Region Community Services 62640200  
[www.crcs.com.au](http://www.crcs.com.au)

Childrens Education and Care Assurance (CECA) 62071114  
[CECA@act.gov.au](mailto:CECA@act.gov.au)

Australian Childrens Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)  
[www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)  
[www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au)

Human Rights Commission 62052222  
[www.hrc.act.gov.au](http://www.hrc.act.gov.au)

Centrelink  
<https://findus.servicesaustralia.gov.au/>

Interpreting Services 131450

[https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/home/web\\_access/interpreting-services](https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/home/web_access/interpreting-services)