

Figtree Heights OOSH educators and committee management would like to reassure all our OOSH families that we are closely monitoring the Department of Education and National and State government updates regarding the continuing development of COVID-19 Coronavirus. We all appreciate that this information is live and likely to change at short notice.

Our team are focused on the health and wellbeing of our community of schools and this will be our overarching philosophy. Our service is taking a proactive approach during this time with increased practices in handwashing, general hygiene and cleaning of our service during all sessions. With the latest update of information, we also have these additional practices in place as of Monday 16th March 2020.

Handwashing & Hygiene

- A hand cleaning station is now available at the hall entrance for all families upon entry and exit of our service that includes wipes, tissues and supply of hand sanitiser when available. Children will also have access to this during our sessions in addition to handwashing times. Our handbasin in the kitchen has also been made available for soap handwashing upon entry / exit of families and children.
- For BSC and ASC sessions all children will be required to wash their hands upon arrival to the service (generally this is directly before eating) as well as upon completion of eating. In addition to this, children will also be required to make use of the hand cleaning station to clean their hands when leaving the service for the session and/or access the handwashing station in the kitchen before leaving.
- We have developed an increased awareness routine for handwashing including posters, educator demonstration and adjustment of routines to allow for effective handwashing to be implemented at all times. This procedure was outlined and implemented last week and will be maintained going forward in all toilet routines in all sessions.
- We have increased our cleaning procedures for our service including disinfecting and sanitising. This includes all surface areas, chairs, tables, toys and entry ways. For our buses, we have also increased cleaning to now include sanitising all seats and doorways after every session. This is in addition to our buses being cleaned by a cleaning service as part of our usual cleaning and maintenance procedures.

Social Distancing

- Any child who is in attendance at the service and who displays symptoms of being unwell will be assessed by educators and may result in parents/carers being contacted to collect immediately
- As recommended by the Australian Government and NSW Department of Education, we will be implementing guidelines around limiting social contact with others. This includes:
 - No hi 5's between children or with educators and children
 - No hugs between children or with educators and children
 - Limited time sitting together as a whole group for announcements / discussions
 - Encourage more personal space with the aim to be at least arm's length away from each other

Current Advice

- Our service is actively ensuring we are complying with up to date guidance from the Australian Government in relation to attendance, quarantine and self-isolation. This includes:
 - Ensuring any child, family member or educator that has returned from overseas as of 16th March self isolates in their home for 14 days
 - Ensuring any child, family member or educator who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 will be excluded from the service for 14 days and must have a medical certificate from a doctor before they can return

- Ensuring any child, family member or educator who has had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, self isolates for 14 days as required.
- Ensuring any child, family member or educator stays home if unwell and does not attend the service during this time.

Home isolation guidance when unwell (excerpt from Australian Government Department of Health)

Who should be isolated at home?

Home isolation for people who are suspected or confirmed to have novel coronavirus COVID-19 is appropriate in the following circumstances, if:

- They are well enough to receive care at home
- They have appropriate caregivers at home
- There is a separate bedroom where they can recover without sharing an immediate space with others
- They have access to food and other necessities
- They (and anyone who lives in the same home) have access to the recommended personal protective equipment (at a minimum, gloves and mask); and
- They do not live with household members who may be at increased risk of complications from novel coronavirus infection (e.g. people over the age of 65, young children, pregnant women, people who are immunocompromised or who have chronic heart, lung, or kidney conditions).

Wherever possible, if you need to travel to your location for isolation (for example, traveling from the airport), you are advised to use a personal mode of transport, such as a car, to minimise exposure to others. If you need to use public transport (e.g. taxis, ride-hail services, trains, buses and trams), follow the precautions outlined in the public transport guide at www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-drivers-andpassengers-using-public-transport

Being isolated at home means that people need to stay at home. A person in isolation cannot leave to attend public places, including work, school, childcare or university. Only people who usually live in the household should be in the home. Do not see visitors.

OOSH operation guidelines

- Our service is required to comply with directives from NSW Public Health Unit and NSW Department of Education in regard to service operations.
- In the event that one of our servicing schools (excluding Figtree Heights Public School) is required to close due to COVID-19 exposure, children from that school will not be able to attend OOSH for duration of time that school is non-operational. Fees associated with these bookings will be waived for the time that the school is non-operational. Further absences after the school returns to operation will incur usual fees and CCS processes.
Servicing schools of OOSH include:
 - Nareena Hills Public School
 - Lindsay Park Public School
 - Figtree Public School
 - Mount St Thomas Public School
- In the event **Figtree Heights Public School** is required to close due to COVID-19 exposure, our service will cease operations for the duration of time guided by the directives of governing authorities.
- In the event that governing bodies make changes to holiday periods due to COVID-19, our service will be non-operational for the duration of time schools are non-operational and will return to operations when schools resume.

Vacation Care

- Our current vacation care program is still running at this time, however some changes are being put in place to ensure we are complying with guidance given by the Australian Government as well as best practice initiatives by our OOSH Management Committee. Further changes may continue to change as more updated information is provided regarding OOSH and Vacation Care operations. Please see below for information on what decisions have been made:
 - All Programmed excursions have been cancelled:
 - Marvel Universe Live
 - Sydney Zoo
 - Sydney Family Show
 - Inflatable Play
 - Zone Bowling
 - Botanic gardens
 - Mt Keira Bushwalk
 - C1 Speed
 - Movies & Rashays
 - Jamberoo Action Park
 - All bookings for these excursions have been closed and moved to the IN Centre roll for those days. There are no fees applied to this change. Families can cancel these bookings at any time up until 3rd April 2020, after this date, absent fees will still apply.
 - In Centre activities will continue as planned, with adjustments to allow up to **60 places per day**.
 - We will be implementing **daily flexible local excursions** for all days. Families can choose to have their child attend these by signing their name up each day on arrival pending a signed consent form.
 - A permission consent form with full details of locations and the option to consent to attend is being developed and will be sent to all families in the coming days. All children on the In Centre roll will be given the opportunity to attend **Daily flexible local excursions**.
 - The routine will be adjusted to ensure multiple zone options are available for this number of children for the day and will consider wet weather plans and a range of additional activities both as free play options and that incorporate the In Centre program activity.
 - Afternoon tea will no longer be provided to families during Vacation Care, however we will continue to supply fruit for additional options. Families are required to provide all meal options for their children each day of attendance. Our service has been attempting to maintain our provision of food through daily shopping and has encountered various alarming difficulties with this. We apologise for this inconvenience at this time.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS)

- CCS will continue for absences up to 42 days in a financial year for any child who is absent due to close contact or confirmed case of COVID-19 without the need for families to provide documentation.
- Once a child's 42 initial absences have been used, ACCS can be paid for a reason defined in the Family Assistance Law, including illness. Evidence is required in this claim, such as a doctor certificate.
- Families are also eligible to claim additional childcare subsidy (temporary financial hardship) to assist with short term support in the event of significantly reduced ability to pay childcare fees, such as loss of income due to illness.

Further information on how to claim can be found through individual family My Gov accounts – Centrelink.

Fees for families

- As outlined in our Fees Policy, fees apply for permanent care bookings where children are enrolled, including when children are absent due to being unwell and cannot attend. In the case of COVID-19 fees are payable where children are in quarantine, home isolation, unable to travel home to Australia or do not attend as a precautionary measure.
- Parents are entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy for up to 42 days without providing a reason for absence. Additional absences may also be entitled to the Subsidy in specific situations including illness. Additional Child Care Subsidy (temporary financial hardship) is also available to provide short term support to families experiencing significant financial difficulty paying fees, for example because they are unable to attend work. Families should discuss their financial support options with Centrelink where required.
- In line with current Government guidance to services, fees will not be payable in cases where the service is directed to close or closes voluntarily to contain the spread of the virus.

Actions for families

- In line with Department of Education management of COVID procedures, families are required to keep their children home from school if they are unwell. This also means to keep their children home from OOSH during this time.
- Any child who is in attendance at the service and who displays symptoms of being unwell will be assessed by educators and may result in parents/carers being contacted to collect immediately
- Families are required to **inform our service** if they or their children develop symptoms of the virus or are confirmed to have the virus.
- Families are required to **provide a written clearance** from a doctor after a period of isolation or quarantine confirming they/their child/family member are not contagious and may return to the service.
- All **currently booked attendances** for all excursions in our upcoming Vacation Care Program have been automatically changed to the In Centre booking for that specific day. Please review your bookings and make your booking cancellation using the MFL app if you no longer wish to attend the service on this day. All changes to bookings are accepted up to **6pm Friday 3rd April 2020**
 - Marvel Universe Live
 - Sydney Zoo
 - Sydney Family Show
 - Inflatable Play
 - Zone Bowling
 - Botanic gardens
 - Mt Keira Bushwalk
 - C1 Speed
 - Movies & Rashays
 - Jamberoo Action Park
- A permission consent form with full details of locations and the option to consent to attend is being developed and will be sent to all families in the coming days. All children on the In Centre roll will be given the opportunity to attend **Daily flexible local excursions. Please return this updated form immediately with all current bookings and/or at time of booking for all new bookings.**

- Our service has developed a **COVID-19 OOSH Response Plan** with detailed actions on changes our service has made and future plans regarding preventative measures and actions for COVID-19 in line with Australian Government Guidelines. The **COVID-19 OOSH Response Plan** is available for families at request by emailing centre@fhoosh.net.

We will continue to provide further updates and information relating to changes for our service as they arise. We would like to sincerely thank all our families for their understanding and support during this time and wish all our families all the very best throughout the challenges associated with COVID-19.

Please ensure you are following the updated information as directed by NSW health and the Australian Government agencies.

Below are some useful links for updated information:

NSW Health: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

Australian Government Department of health: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

NSW Department of Education, Early Childhood Education: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/latest-alerts/coronavirus---advice-for-children-s-education-and-care-services>

NSW Department of Education: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/school-safety/novel-coronavirus>

Hand washing guidance poster: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pandemic/Publications/hand-wash-community.pdf>

Frequently asked questions: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/coronavirus-faqs.aspx#sec5>