



Family Handbook

Our Mission

At Newtown Kids Cottage our mission is to provide children with the opportunity to grow and be enriched through a diverse range of activities, experiences and relationships.

We aim to provide staff, families and children with a supportive and safe environment that works towards understanding, respecting and meeting children's individual needs and requirements.

We value appropriate play in all its forms, so that children can engage in meaningful, out of school leisure activities, assisted by motivated staff.

We value creating an inclusive, welcoming service in which we celebrate diversity in our community.

Hours

Monday to Friday School terms
Before School Care
7:30am – 9:00am
After School Care
3:00pm – 6:00pm

9557 6825
0418 899 416
newtownkidscottage@gmail.com

Note: On completing an Application for Enrolment it is the understanding of NKC Management that you have read and understood this document. If you require this document to be translated or would like to make an appointment to go through the document with staff please call on 02 9557 6825 or email us on newtownkidscottage@gmail.com.

Please note the references throughout this document to our Policies and Procedures Manual. Throughout 2005; staff, children and parents worked on developing guidelines under which we adhere. These were written with legislation, and common practice in mind. Policies are updated regularly. Below is a list of Policies that are available for your perusal. There is a manual on display in the parent information shelf and a document or part of is available from staff on request.

NKC POLICIES

Management and Administration

Governance and Management
Confidentiality
Management of Complaints
Determining a Responsible Person
Fees
Emergency and Evacuation
Management of Incident, Injury and Trauma
Management of Basic First Aid
Illness and Infectious Diseases
Enrolment and Orientation
Delivery and Collection of Children
Dealing with Medical Conditions
Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation

Programming

Sun Protection
Water Safety
Nutrition
Excursions

Staffing Matters

Interactions with Children
Staff professionalism
Staffing
Providing a Child Safe Environment

Parents Involvement

Newtown Kids Cottage is a parent run service. Staff are employed to operate the service. Newtown Kids Cottage is an associated incorporation and on payment of the annual registration fee each family becomes a registered member of the association.

The Management Committee is elected annually and regular meetings are held in accordance with the Articles of Registration. **All parents are encouraged to attend meetings.** The meeting dates are announced in the School Newsletter. A contact list of current committee members is available on the parents' information board.

Introduction

Based on the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) Priority of Access Guidelines, the main priority for a place at Newtown Kids Cottage (NKC) will be given to working parents, parents seeking work and parents studying for work purposes.

Newtown Kids Cottage is designed to provide a quality service for children aged 4 – 12 years who attend Newtown Public School. We are housed in a self-contained cottage at the back of the school.

Aim

- To provide a friendly, caring, safe environment that will foster each child's growth and development.
- To provide an environment, that will promote each child's self-esteem and encourage play on non-bias and gender equality.
- For the children to enjoy themselves.
- To provide a program of activities that is stimulating, interesting and which will allow opportunities to develop new skills.
- To help the children appreciate and care for each other and their surroundings.

Capacity

From 2017 NKC can accommodate up to **126** permanent bookings and 5 casual bookings per day for children attending the Centre.

Casual booking can be made from 7AM the day care is required. Occasionally the Responsible Person will make an exception to this rule when place is available and care is truly casual.

Booking can be made by leaving a message on 9557 6825.

Staffing

NKC's permanent staff are supported by a team of casual Educators. The recommended ratio for OOSH is 1 staff: 15 children. We aim to work on the ratio of 1 staff: 13.5 children (including casual care) to provide the highest quality care possible. Carlie Henderson is NKC's Manager and Nominated Supervisor. See our staff board at the centre for more information on our current staff.

CCB and Childcare Rebate

Our service is approved for Child Care Benefit and Childcare Rebate. Eligibility is determined by the Department of Human Services. Providing CRNs for both you and your child on enrolment is the only way of accessing your entitlements. **Contact the Department of Human Services for more information 13 61 50.** Families not intending to access CCR or CCB will need to sign off a separate form.

Nominated Parent

NKC policy determines that one Carer per account must be the Nominated Parent. This person should be the Carer with the CRN and all correspondence will be delivered to this person. On enrolment it is important that this person nominates a method for contact. As an issue of sustainability and efficiency, NKC prefers email. It is the Nominated Parent's responsibility to keep NKC up to date with contact details.

Fee Schedule

Before School Care		After School Care
Permanent sessions	\$15.00	\$24.00 1 st child \$20.00 2 nd child \$19.00 3 rd child
Casual care	\$16.00	\$25.00 1 st child \$21.00 2 nd child \$20.00 3 rd child

Casual care is provided for emergencies or for other short-term requirements. Parents must book casual care prior to the session to ensure availability. Children without bookings may be sent back to school if no place is available.

The fee schedule is reviewed each term in the light of changing enrolments and parents will be given four weeks' notice of any increase in fees. Notice will be given via the school newsletter and information will be available at the Centre.

Parents wishing to secure and maintain out of school care for their children must pay two weeks in advance at the acceptance of their enrolment. Throughout the year fees must continue to be paid two weeks in advance. If parents find it more convenient they may pay for longer periods. Payments can be made online into our account or by cash deposit at any Commonwealth bank branch. **WE DO NOT HAVE CREDIT FACILITIES AND WE DO NOT ACCEPT CASH.**

Failure to have fees up to date by the end of each term may jeopardise your placement at the Centre. We are able to provide concessions for those struggling to pay fees. This must be arranged via the Manager or committee member.

Fees will be charged for each week of your child's enrolment during school terms, including all public holidays and any absences such as sickness and/or family holidays that occur. Two weeks written notice is required to reduce sessions or withdraw from care. In the event two weeks written notice is not provided, fees will be charged in lieu of notice for sessions booked. **See Fee Policy**

Annual Registration Fee

Each Family is charged an annual registration fee on confirmation of placement. This entitles one vote per family at committee meetings and at the Annual General Meeting. The registration fee for 2017 is \$30.00 and will be invoiced when enrolment is confirmed.

Enrolment

Every year, an Application for Enrolment form must be submitted by all families currently using the service ('existing families'), to maintain current levels of placement. This allows NKC to maintain accurate information on the children using the service, and manage increasing demand for places.

In considering the offers of placement for each calendar year, priority will be given to those existing families which continue to meet NKC's **main priority of placement** policy (working parents, parents seeking work, parents studying for work) [refer to **Enrolment and Orientation Policy**] and who have complied with the information and fee payment requirements.

Families currently using the service ('existing families')

Each year NKC will ask all existing families to re-enrol their children currently using the service by completing an Application for Enrolment form. This form must be returned to the Centre by 5pm on the last day of Term 3 with fees paid up to Term 3 to enable NKC to prioritise your re-enrolment. Requests for additional days and changes to days for existing families will be assessed with enrolments for new children.

Existing families will be reminded four weeks prior of the re-enrolment cut-off date via email, pocket note and reminders displayed at NKC.

If families currently using the service do not re-enrol and have fees up-to-date by the cut-off date, the application for enrolment will be assessed with new enrolment applications. This may result in the child(ren's) place at the Centre being offered to another family, and your application for re-enrolment being placed on the waiting list.

If you are a family currently using the service that does not meet NKC **main priority placement** criteria you may be required to surrender your placement to a child on the waiting list who meets a higher priority of access. This will only occur if the Centre has no vacant places, and two weeks notice will be given in these circumstances.

Parents will be advised of enrolment status by the end of Week 2 in Term 4.

New families using the service or additional days and change of days for existing families

NKC will allocate placement for new applications for enrolments and additional and change of days for existing families after settlement of all re-enrolments of existing families.

Any remaining places will be offered to new families and existing families seeking additional days and change of days according to:

- DEEWR and NKC **main priority placement** of working parents, parents seeking work, parents studying for work,
- Consideration of whether the applicant's child(ren) has a sibling(s) already using the service*,
- Consideration of all other priority categories, *and*
- Position on the waiting list

*NKC has a policy of prioritising siblings of existing children over other applicants.

Priority of Access Guidelines

The Priority of Access Guidelines requires potential families to identify whether they classify under of the following categories for children on a waiting list. When filling vacant places, a service must fill them according to the following Main Priorities:

First Priority – a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect

Second Priority – a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy the work/training/study test under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act *(The eligible hours for CCB on the child's income Assessment Notice will tell you this)*

Third Priority – any other child

We also ask that parents share any other information that may assist us in allocation of their enrollment. This may include families which include a disabled person, families from culturally and linguistically diverse background, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families and some single families.

Attendance:

Fees must be paid for the days your child is booked into the Centre, including times when your child is absent due to illness or holidays. Parents must notify the Centre if their child is going to be absent on their scheduled day, or are attending other activities before attending the Centre e.g. drama or art classes.

Parents are required to advise the Centre if their child will not be attending on any particular day. If you do not let staff know they will follow the Delivery and Collection of Children policy. This can take 1 or 2 staff members 20 minutes to conduct which compromises staff supervision ratios.

Parents who don't alert staff to their child's absence will incur a \$5.00 administration fee on top of the daily fee. This administration fee is not eligible for CCB/CCR.

Late Fees:

Children must be collected by 6:00pm. Late collections will result in the cost borne by the Centre being passed onto parents. A flat rate of \$20.00 for a collection between 6-6.10pm will be incurred.

After that an extra charge of \$1.00 per minute will be incurred. I understand that NKC staff are not legally responsible for my child after 6pm and that these staff are obligated to notify the Department of Community Services if my child is repeatedly left after the 6pm closing time. Late fees are not eligible for CCB/CCR.

Parents who are unavoidably detained should ring the Centre and if possible make arrangements for the child to be collected prior to 6:00pm. After 15 minutes the nominated contact person will be called. If no one can be contacted after 30 minutes the Children's Emergency Service will be called. Parents who are regularly late may lose their child's placement at the Centre.

Custody and Guardianship:

A parent who has sole custody of a child needs to provide the Centre with a copy of a court order, which will be kept with records at the Centre. Staff will also be made aware of the requirements of the custody order. If no court order is provided staff are unable to prevent the child being collected by a parent.

Refreshments:

Before School Care children will be given breakfast of a range of cereals, toast etc. Afternoon Tea will consist of nutritious snacks and is provided from 3.00pm each day. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that the Centre is aware of any food allergies or restrictions your child may have. **See Nutrition Policy**

Program

The program aims to provide activities to suit all ages and interests, both indoors and outdoors. Children have the opportunity to participate in a range of organised activities as well as free play.

Messy activities are part of children's leisure activities. All care will be taken but we cannot guarantee that uniforms will remain spotless. If this is a problem then please provide alternate clothes or a coverall for your child to wear. The paint used in the Centre is designed for infant schools and should be washed in cold water.

Each week a written program outlining the activities for the week will be on display on the family notice board. Staff are constantly seeking feedback from children and parents to provide an exciting and challenging program. We ask that you make note of any ideas, suggestions or feedback in our ideas book.

NKC staff will regularly supervise activities outside the direct grounds of the NPS. For any excursions beyond Lillian Fowler Reserve or the NHSPA Oval parents will be informed. If you do not consent to your child participating in activities at either Lillian Fowler Reserve or the NHSPA Oval please ensure nominated supervisor is made aware in writing.

Daily Routine

Before care

Staff will take kindergarten children to their lines at 9:00am until children are confident to make their way to the playground independently. All other children will have the opportunity to play in the main playground at 8.30am when school supervision begins. If you would rather your child stay at the centre until 9.00am please let staff know.

Aftercare

Children are expected to move directly from their classroom at 3:00pm to the Centre and get their name marked off by a staff member.

Rules of the Centre

We follow the same rules as the school in order to provide a level of continuity.

Respect yourself and others

Think

Take Care

Co-operate

Signing in/out

A parent or guardian must sign each child into a session of Before Care. If an adult is not available to sign a child in, NKC must have notice in writing before a child attends. Staff are responsible for signing children into each session of aftercare. This is done by a roll call at 3.00pm. It is essential that we are informed if your child will not be attending an afternoon session that is part of their regular schedule. We need to comply with the relevant policy and we may call you if a child has not shown up for 3pm roll call. An administrative charge of \$5.00 will be added to the account for each phone call.

It is the responsibility of the person collecting the child to sign the daily attendance sheet and note the time that the child leaves the Centre. Children will only be allowed to leave the Centre with a person nominated on the enrolment form. Staff must be notified if alternative arrangements have been made. The alternate collector will have to sign the book and show identification before they will be allowed to pick up the child.

See Delivery and Collection of Children Policy.

Sick Children

We follow the same recommendations as the school when it comes to sick children. If a child becomes ill or is injured and requires medical attention, all reasonable steps will be taken without delay to secure medical attention and to notify the responsible adult.

Separate care will be provided with a child who becomes unwell while at the Centre until a parent or guardian arrives to pick up the child. We ask that you keep them home if they are unwell in the morning. Please notify staff as soon as possible if your child has a contagious illness.

Any medication that needs to be administered during the Centre's hours of operation must be in original packaging and must be given to staff by a parent. You will be asked to complete a Medication Register.

No medication will be given to the child to be taken home. It is the responsibility of the person collecting the child to ask for the medication.

Accident Policy.

The Centre will ensure that as a minimum standard, at least one staff member working each day has a current First Aid Certificate.

In the case of an accident the staff member with the First Aid Certificate will assess the situation and if minor, treat the injury, or if in any doubt seek medical advice.

If a child is injured and requires medical attention, all reasonable steps will be taken without delay to secure medical attention and to notify the responsible adult.

In the event of a child needing care outside of NKC, a staff member will accompany the child to hospital until a parent is available.

Details of all incidents, major or minor, will be recorded on an incident form. You will be asked to sign off anytime a form has been completed for your child. **See Management of Basic First Aid Policy**

Parents Responsibilities

To inform the Manager in writing where possible if:

- Your child is having troubles at the Centre.
- There is any additional information in relation to your child.
- To attend working bees and committee meetings throughout the year.
- Your child is attending any activities before attending the Centre.
- You need to cancel your booking.
- Someone different will be picking up your child
- You are unable to pay your fees.
- You have changed you contact details.
- Custody/Access arrangements have changed.
- If your child is sick or will be away on holidays

Discipline

For the benefit of everyone at the Centre a certain level of behaviour is expected from each child.

Staff will endeavor to discourage and redirect disruptive behaviour and praise positive behaviour.

If necessary a child may be given time out from an activity until their behaviour becomes more acceptable. Staff will ask the child what rule they have broken and attempt to encourage the child to come up with a better way of dealing with the inappropriate behaviour.

Behaviour difficulties will be discussed with the child and then, if necessary with the parents. If behaviour does not improve the child's place at the service may be jeopardised.

Personal Possessions

Please do not allow children to bring lollies, chewing gum or aggressive toys to the Centre. Articles brought to the Centre for projects should be given to staff for safe keeping and not left in bags or played with during the session. Staff will assume no responsibility for children's clothing, toys or personal possessions.

Child Observations

As part of our ongoing program evaluation and assessment of our curriculum against the National Quality Framework outcomes we conduct daily observations. These observations will generally involve photographs and written information about the involvement of various children and activities. Staff will collate some of these observations for our fortnightly newsletter. If at any point you would like to see some of your child's observations please ask staff and we can organise this.

Vacation Care

NKC does not provide vacation care. There are a range of services in the area providing care for school age children. NKC will endeavor to provide relevant information before the school holidays.

Complaints Procedure

If you would like to make a formal complaint, please see our **Management of Complaints Policy**. This will be followed up immediately by the Management Committee. All issues raised will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

We ensure that your child's position will not be affected if you chose to follow through with these procedures.

If you do not feel comfortable addressing concerns with our Management Committee all parents have the right to contact the NSW Early Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education and Communities (ececd@det.nsw.edu.au or 1800 619 113 (toll free))

Contact details for the Management Committee are available on the Centre Information Board located at the sign in desk.