



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 Educators, 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 Educators.

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

Hours	
Before School Care	7:30am – 9:00am
After School Care	3:00pm – 6:00pm
Vacation Care	7:30am – 5:30pm

hi@newtownkidscottage.com.au

9557 6825

0418 899 416

At Newtown Kids Cottage, we play and work on the land of the Eora Nations. Here we observe, learn, and grow.
We honour the Cadigal People who cared for this land for many generations before us and we pay respect to Elders past and present.
Always was and always will be.

Please note the references throughout this document to our Policies and Procedures Manual. Throughout 2005; Educators, 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. There is a manual on display in the parent information shelf and a document or part of it is available from the service on request.

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 an Educator, please call on 02 9557 6825 or email us on hi@newtownkidscottage.com.au

All Policies are available on our Parent Portal on OWNA.

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 Board 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

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

NKC can accommodate up to **154** permanent bookings for aftercare and **81** places for Before care. We attempt to keep **5** places available each afternoon for casual bookings per day. There are places available for casual before care. Vacation Care numbers are currently dependent on need, Educator availability and activity type.

Aftercare 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 through the app, emailing us at hi@newtownkidscottage.com.au or by texting 0418 899 416

Staffing

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

CCSS (Child Care Subsidy Scheme)

Our service is approved for Child Care Subsidy. 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.

Once an enrolment has been offered and accepted, families must complete a CWA (Complying Written Agreement) which acknowledges fees and schedules. Prior to starting care it is a Centrelink requirement that families login to their My Gov account to confirm enrolment at NKC so as to ensure CCS is payable from their child's start date. This will be prompted by a My Gov notification that requires action.

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	Before care	Aftercare
Permanent sessions	\$17.00	\$27.00 - 1 st Child \$23.00 - 2 nd Child \$22.00 - 3 rd Child
Casual care	\$19.00	\$28.00 - 1 st Child \$24.00 - 2 nd Child \$23.00 - 3 rd Child
Vacation Care	Incentre days	Excursions/Incursions
	\$75.00	\$85.00

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.

Invoices will be sent out through the OWNA app at the start of each term. 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 can 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 Board meetings and at the Annual General Meeting. The registration fee for 2023 is \$35.00 and will be invoiced when enrolment is confirmed.

Enrolment

Every year, all families currently using the service ('existing families'), must update their details on our enrolment portal OWNA 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. This process must be completed by 5pm on the last day of Term 3 with fees paid up 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 and will be reliant on having cleared outstanding fees.

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.

If families currently using the service do not comply with the re-enrol process and/or have outstanding fees by the cut-off date, we will assume they no longer require care for the upcoming year and their existing days will not be held.

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 3 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 NKC's main priority placement of working parents, parents seeking work, or 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.*

NKC 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 CCS 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 enrolment. 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.

Parents are required to advise the Centre if their child will not be attending on any day. This can be done through OWNA. If you do not let the service know they will follow the Delivery and Collection of Children policy. This can take 1 or 2 Educators 20 minutes to conduct which compromises supervision ratios. Parents who don't alert the service 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 CCS.

Extra Curriculum

On occasion where children will be attending an afterschool activity on-site and returning to NKC, we will need you to complete an Extracurricular form. Available in OWNA, via email or hard copies are at the cottage.

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 closing time and 10mins after closing. After that an extra charge of \$1.00 per minute will be incurred. NKC Educators are not legally responsible for children after 6pm and Educators 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 CCS.

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

Where a parent has a court ordered custodial arrangement, it is important that a copy of the arrangement is provided on enrolment. Relevant Educators will also be made aware of the requirements of the custody order. If no court order is provided, the service is 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.

During Vacation Care NKC will provide breakfast (for children who arrive before 8.30am), lunch and late afternoon snack. Families should pack morning and afternoon tea.

Program

As part of the Australian Government's National Quality Framework, NKC's program is guided by the national My Time, Our Place curriculum. The program aims to provide leisure and play based activities that respond to children's needs, interests, and choices.

Our programmed activities encompass a broad theme, changing every term. Previous program themes have included Around the World, Sustainability and Conservation, The 7 Senses, and Creature Great and Small. Each week consists of games, arts, crafts, STEM, cooking, and research activities inspired by the weekly subtheme. Children can participate in a range of organised activities as well as free play. We like to think of NKC as a big backyard! We regularly engage outside providers to enrich our program by offering the children a chance to learn a specialised skill or activity. Past activities have included acrobatics, skateboarding, circus skills, martial arts, cartoon workshops and Kids Giving Back sessions. The cost of these extra activities is free to families and absorbed by NKC.

Each week a written program outlining the activities for the week will be on display on the whiteboard on our veranda. A copy is also included in our weekly newsletter. Educators regularly seek feedback from children and families to provide an exciting and challenging program. We ask that you make note of any ideas, suggestions or feedback and let us know via email

hi@newtownkidscottage.com.au.

NKC Educators 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 the service know.

Aftercare

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

Kindergarten will be collected from their class at 3pm.

If you feel your child needs support in getting from their classroom to the cottage, please let us know.

Vacation Care

Our Vacation Care program is a mix of incursions and excursions. Our program is distributed via email in Week 7 of each Term. Bookings are completed through the OWNA parent portal.

Rules of the Centre

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

Safe

Respectful

Responsible

Active Learners

Signing in/out

A parent or guardian must be present to 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 attend. Parents must sign their children in using the OWNA app either on their own device or through a service provided tablet. Educators 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. You can do this through OWNA. 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 out the child using the OWNA app either on their own device or through a service provided tablet. 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 authorised person may be asked to show identification before they will be allowed to pick up the child. See Delivery and Collection of Children

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 Educators 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 an Educator by a parent. You will be asked to complete a Medication Register. This can be done through the parent portal.

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 Educator working each day has a current First Aid Certificate.

In the case of an accident the Educator 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, an Educator 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:

- o Your child is having troubles at the Centre.
- o There is any additional information in relation to your child.
- o 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.
- o Someone different will be picking up your child
- o You are unable to pay your fees.
- o You have changed your contact details.
- o Custody/Access arrangements have changed.
- o If your child is sick or will be away on holidays

Behaviour Management

For the benefit of everyone at the Centre a certain level of behaviour is expected from each child. NKC Educators Endeavor to discourage and redirect disruptive behaviour and praise positive behaviour.

Where challenging behaviour consists, Educators will be guided through the Behaviour management flow chart . On occasion, we may work together with the school to negotiate a framework to ensure children are supported in ensuring a more acceptable level of 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 Educators for safekeeping 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 contact the service and we can organise this.

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 choose 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 (eeced@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 desks or you can email hi@newtownkidscottage.com.au with "For Committee" in the subject line.

Software System

On enrollment parents will be sent a link to OWNA, and app which supports our service management software. Through OWNA we send out our invoices, notifications, newsletters, and vacation care programs. It will also allow you to sign your child in and out and make casual bookings or notify us of a non-attendance. It is important that parents have access to this app. If this is a problem for you, please let us know on enrolment.