

Our Service's statement of philosophy will guide our interactions with children as follows:

Lane Cove Out of School Hours Inc (LCOOS) is a community based non - profit organisation operating outside of Government School hours. LCOOS operates two Centre's – Longueville Road and Lane Cove Public School (LCPS). We aim to meet the needs of school aged children within the local community.

We believe that the children of parents/guardians who have work, study or other commitments should be afforded every opportunity to be cared for in a relaxed, safe and secure environment with a friendly, fun and enjoyable atmosphere. LCOOS educators aim to work with children during their development and learning process.

We encourage variety and choice to foster individual and group interests, needs and wants to build on skills, talents and abilities in all children.

Educators collaborate with children to provide active play, structured activities, and spontaneous leisure opportunities that are meaningful to children and support their well-being, self-esteem, confidence, learning and development.

We aim to work with children while they construct their own identities and understanding of their world. We emphasis the importance of diversity and support each child's values, family ideals, beliefs, religion, gender and cultural background in a non-judgmental environment

Furthermore we believe in creating strong relationships and promoting respect for all things and people. LCOOS support parents and families during their child's development, in an environment aiming to promote a sense of belonging, being and becoming by following these policies and guidelines which we have set out in this document.

Happy educators = happy centre = happy children = happy parents

CHILDREN

We believe every child is an individual and the identity and independence of a child is crucial to his/her overall development. We believe in extending and enriching the well-being and development of children at LCOOS. We foster this by ensuring each child:

- 1: Has a strong sense of identity
- 2: Is connected with and contributes to their world
- 3: Has a strong sense of wellbeing
- 4: Is confident and is an involved learner
- 5: Is an effective communicator.

We believe every child is unique in his/her understanding of the environment and in this belief he/she deserves respect and consideration. We also believe that children can learn to value themselves and make healthy choices

Each child has the right to be cared for in a safe, secure, happy and relaxed environment. We offer this emotional freedom by providing warm, meaningful interactions and relationships with the children

We respect the diversity of our families and communities, whether it be cultural, religious or perspective. We encourage each child's diversity by upholding each child's right to have their culture, identity, abilities and strengths acknowledged and valued.

We believe that open communication among educators, families and children is the basis of establishing trusting relationships.

We encourage co-operation and collaboration in; expressions of feelings, negotiation, conflict resolution, problem solving and strategies as part of the program with the children.

FAMILIES

We believe that collaborative relationships with families are crucial to achieving quality outcomes for children. We base our partnerships with families on communication, consultation and collaboration.

We aim to provide a respectful and supportive environment where everyone feels welcomed and valued. We respect parents' individual views, values and beliefs about childrearing. Parents are encouraged to be involved in issues that relate to them and their child's learning and wellbeing, through participation and discussion about all issues relevant to the running of LCOOS.

Educators aim to develop positive relationships with parents based on mutual trust and open communication. We aim to provide clear channels of communication through regular newsletters, notices, suggestion box, word of mouth, and parent /management meetings.

MANAGEMENT

We focus on effective leadership and management of LCOOS in order to provide quality environments for children's learning and development by ensuring we operate according to the legal requirements of a managing body. The Parent Management Committee will ensure that decisions are made in a proper way, according to the LCOOS constitution and in the best interests of the service.

We believe that effective leadership promotes a positive organisational culture.

EDUCATORS

We believe that our Educators are the most valuable asset to the quality of LCOOS. Each educator aims to develop respectful and friendly relationships with each child in attendance. We also aim to create safe and educational environments and to encourage children's active engagement in our program. Our educators are responsive to each child's strengths, abilities and interests and look to build on their skills to ensure each child's wellbeing, motivation and engagement in the program. Our educators work collaboratively, sharing our expertise in chosen areas of OOSH care and education.

We believe in continuous training to keep all our educators consistent, committed and educated in the out of school hour's field.

COMMUNITY

We aim to uphold the values held by the various cultures within our community and to foster understanding amongst our children of their friends' beliefs.

LCOOS collaborates with other organisations to ensure we provide a service which enhances children's learning and wellbeing.

We also believe that the children should feel part of the community in which they live in or go to school in. We aim to encourage their involvement in the wider community. As part of this, we aim to develop and maintain links, share information and work in collaboration with other relevant community organisations.

LCOOS is open during the day for parental visits in which we welcome parents to take the opportunity to be involved in the activities of LCOOS and to offer their individual skills to enhance our understanding of their families.

LCOOS will work to accommodate families with children with special needs to the best of our abilities and with the facilities we have. We encourage attendance at LCOOS of those from a non-English speaking background and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Descent. We endeavor to provide a supportive, stimulating and accepting environment.

The CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

We aim to develop and implement a balanced program that is stimulating, interesting and exciting which allows for children to play, explore, develop new skills and is appropriate to the development and leisure needs of all children. One of the primary objectives of this program is to support the natural play that children initiate and engage in spontaneously. We aim through our program to enhance each child's learning and development.

Our program nurtures the development of life skills and complements children's experiences, opportunities and relationships at school, at home and in the community.

In order to maintain positive interactions with children our service and educators will maintain the following:

- Our service will provide a relaxed and happy atmosphere for the children.
- Our service will ensure mealtimes are relaxed and unhurried and educators take the time to sit and talk with children.
- Our educators will encourage children to initiate conversations about their experiences inside and outside the service as well as what is happening around them, express their ideas and feelings, share humour with the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and educators and seek assistance as they take on new challenges and try to do things for themselves.
- Our educators and coordinators will respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and engage them in sustained conversations about their interests in a positive manner.
- Our educators will engage in two way communication with children. That is, encourage children to have their own opinions, ideas and comments. Educators should support children with this and let them know that their ideas are valued.
- Our routines, as well as planned and spontaneous experiences will be organised to maximise opportunity for meaningful conversations between children and educators and the service will ensure that all children have equal opportunity to engage in one to one and small group conversations with educators.
- Our statement of philosophy and policy on interactions with children will be visible.
- Our educators will take into account our children's needs for independence and will enable them to spend a large amount of time with their peers, provide leadership opportunities and allow them to be involved in decision making processes.
- Our educators will use techniques such as sign language and other resources and tools to support children with additional needs.

- Our educators will use their interactions with children to support the maintenance of home languages and learning English as an additional language.
- Our educators and coordinators will use information from their observations of interactions with children to extend the children's thinking and learning.
- Our nominated supervisor and educators will learn more about the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families using the service.
- Our educators will allow time to talk to parents about their children. This allows educators to gain insight into their home life.
- Our service will implement strategies to assist all children to develop a sense of belonging and confidence through positive interactions between the children and educators.
- Our service's roster will be planned in a way that promotes continuity for children.
- Our service will gather information from families in the enrolment form in order to be able to provide support for children during the settling in process.
- When children have special needs our service will consult with other professionals or support agencies that work with children to gather information that will guide our interactions with these children. This information will be recorded in the child's file.