Introduction

Saints Peter & Paul Before and After School Care and Vacation program is provided under the auspices of the School Community Council.

The school has a vital interest in ensuring a high standard of care. The provider has a responsibility to meet the regulations set down by the ACT government for After School Care providers. While the Council recognises that providers of outside school hours care are required to be licensed and provide care that meets certain standards, it considers that on a regular basis a competitive process should be undertaken to test the market and ensure that the best possible services are provided at the school. Regular review of service provision is also desirable.

This policy sets out the expectations of the Council and benchmarks against which service providers will be measured.

Assumptions

Consistent with the Children and Young People Act 2008 – Version R30 (the Act), the Council's fundamental concerns is that the provider:
• recognises that the best interests of the children are paramount;
• provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment; and
• provide for and promotes the well-being, care and protection of the children and young people.

The service provider must have a proven record in providing out of hours care that demonstrates a commitment to providing a well managed service in accordance with their written operating procedures that are safe, nurturing, varied and that take account of the children's specific needs and interests.

The provider should also have demonstrated a commitment to developing programs with the participation of parents, staff and children.
Directions

The service provider must be licensed and hold necessary insurances.

The service provider must have written operating procedures. A copy of these operating procedures should be provided to the school and be available for inspection to any parent upon request.

The policy should also:
- state the underpinning philosophy of the service provider in relation to programming and explain how the program will establish an environment that will be interesting, well balanced (including catering for children needing activity and rest), instructive, enjoyable and stimulating for the children participating
- provide for the appropriate use of electronic media in the program
- provide guidelines on food/nutrition and hygiene

The policy relating to the use of electronic media in the program must support the developmental and educational needs of the children and must use only G-rated media, unless (in the case of PG-rated material) prior parental permission has been given in writing.

The school must be satisfied that the procedures establish an effective mechanism for, amongst other things:
- accurately managing the personal information of students, their attendance and accounting and record keeping issues
- communicating with parents, including dispute resolution mechanisms.

The service provider must also have in place procedures to ensure that staff, relief staff, support staff etc are familiar with the policies and procedures of the service provider, and the particular requirements of individual participating children and the school. The service provider must ensure staff are familiar with the emergency, fire safety and evacuation procedures.

The food and nutrition policy of the service provider must be consistent with the school's nutrition policy.

Importance will also be placed upon a proven:
- capacity of a provider to supply constancy of staff (or of relief staff) where those staff are well trained and to ensure that there will be an appropriate proportion of staff having relevant qualifications
- ability to communicate effectively with parents and take into account their specific requests and concerns.

Recognising that the program will be provided on school premises, it will also be important for the provider to have demonstrated an ability to maintain the premises, and any equipment used, appropriately and to leave the premises clean and tidy.
It will also be important that the provider have demonstrated an ability to communicate clearly, and work with, the school and parents to ensure the program runs as effectively as possible having regard to the interests of the children and parents and the competing needs of school.