

FORREST AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Parent information sheet 2008

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VENUE

Forrest After School Care (FASC) is situated in the Junior Hall and adjoining corridors of Forrest Primary School. FASC operates from 7.30am to 8.55am and 3pm until 6pm each school day. Entry to FASC is via the kindergarten doors – to the left hand side of the school car park. Please note that the drop off for Before School Care is via the gate and path on Hobart Avenue and directly into the junior hall. Vacation Care is also situated in the junior hall and access is the same as Before School Care

Please note that Before School Care is dependant on enrolment numbers. If minimum bookings are not received this service will be cancelled. A decision will be made prior to the end of the 2007 school year and will then be reassessed regularly to ensure the services viability.

PHILOSOPHY

FASC caters for children from Kindergarten to Year Six. At FASC we believe that children should be allowed time for unstructured play after their school day in a safe and caring environment where all children feel that they belong and feel special.

We aim to:

- Deliver a quality and affordable after school care program;
- Provide the children with an enjoyable environment in which they feel comfortable and safe;
- Provide activities that enhance children's social, emotional, cognitive, creative, and physical development;
- Provide relaxing, enjoyable and interesting activities;
- Support the development of each child's potential, and take account of anti-bias issues such as gender, sexism, racism and stereotyping;
- Develop a positive rapport with children, parents, the school and the wider community;
- Support the school with provision of childcare for special events as required;
- Provide opportunities for staff to further their skills and knowledge through professional development courses, which in turn will enable the highest professional standard of childcare to be delivered;
- Ensure that the management of FASC is efficient, effective and accountable and that resources, including the building and facilities are of a suitable standard.

ENROLMENT

Attendance is either on a permanent or casual basis. An enrolment form must be completed in full and returned to the Centre prior to your child/ren's first visit. Enrolment forms are available at the Centre. Completed enrolment forms should be returned directly to the Director.

It is important that enrolment forms are completed accurately and that the Director is notified of any change of details. Change of details can be done in person, in writing or via email.

No child can be admitted to the Centre without a completed enrolment form.

ABSENT CHILDREN

It is essential that FASC is notified if your child will be absent from any booked sessions of after school care. Please advise FASC by 2.45pm on the day that your child will be absent. Please do not notify the Front Office staff of the School as it is not the schools responsibility to advise us of any absences from FASC.

Non notification fee

If your child is absent and you do not notify the centre by 2.45pm on the day of the booking a \$5 fee will be charged. Notification of absence can be made in person, via telephone, email or fax, see above for details.

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CONFIDENTIALITY¹

In the course of their professional duties, staff acquire information that is private. Staff will never discuss the individuals, families or children with whom they work outside of the Centre. Care should also be taken during discussions within the Centre to ensure that information is not overheard by irrelevant parties.

All information and records that are kept about individuals and families may only be accessed by the Centre's staff. Staff records are similarly confidential and will only be available to the Director, Bookkeeper, Auditor and the Employee.

No parent, child or staff information will be given to another party without prior consent.

The Centre's business affairs, reports and minutes of meetings are confidential, unless the Management Committee, Director or any legal entity decree otherwise.

Email communication is used as a major communication tool within the Centre. Emails will be treated confidentially and when bulk emails are sent BCC will always be used to keep email addresses confidential.

As required FASC will provide attendance and absence records to Centrelink.

FEES

Permanent bookings

Before School Care \$11 per session.

After School Care \$14.50 per session.

Please indicate on the enrolment form the days that you wish your child/ren to attend.

Casual bookings

Before School Care please book as early as possible. Messages need to be left prior to 7.30am – the office is not attended once Before School Care commences. The charge is \$13 per session.

After School Care - A certain amount of places are set aside each afternoon for casual bookings charged at \$17.50 per session.

To make a casual booking please contact the Centre on 62958985 or email forrestasc@optusnet.com.au by 7.30am for any morning and 2pm on any afternoon that you wish your child/ren to attend. An answering machine is also connected to this number on which messages can be left. ***If you leave a message then your call will only be returned if a place is not available for your child.*** Payment for care is to be made on the day of use.

Please note that casual bookings made more than two weeks in advance will be deemed permanent. This means that you will be charged the \$11 (BSC) or \$14.50 (ASC) for the dates of the booking made.

Child Care Benefit

Most families are entitled to some form of benefit. The minimum rebate works out to approximately \$1.20 per child per day. To have your fees reduced please contact the Family Assistance Office on 136150 prior to your child commencing care. Once we have received a letter stating your eligibility your bill is adjusted accordingly. Forrest Before and After School Care's Customer Reference Number is 555006575V – this covers both Before and After School Care, you will need to quote this number when applying. If you will also be using our Vacation Care service you will also need to register 407254091V and then your fees will also be adjusted for Vacation Care.

If you choose not to have your fees reduced you can make a lump sum claim at the end of the financial year. For us to complete the appropriate paperwork please check the appropriate box on the enrolment form (page 4). Please note that if you do not check a box on the enrolment for Childcare Benefit you will not be eligible for any fee rebates – including the 30% rebate available to all families after the completion of a financial year.

¹ National Standards, section 5.3 (Maintenance of Records), The National Privacy Principles in the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000

Child Care Benefit, Accident records and insurance requirements

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PRIORITY OF ACCESS

There can be no guarantee that all requests for places will be met as FASC must remain within its licensing conditions – currently allowing for a maximum of 150 children. If the maximum number of children is reached then the priority of access² as outlined below will be considered and a waiting list will be utilised. The waiting list will be developed and updated regularly which identifies priority of access eligibility, date placed on list and required days of care.

Placement from the waiting list is determined by priority of access guidelines, siblings of children already in care, and date of placement on the waiting list.

Parents are able to access their status on the waiting list on request.

- 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.
Third Priority Any other child.

CANCELLATIONS – revised May 2007

Permanent bookings:

Two weeks written notice must be given to the Director if booked days are to be reduced, cancelled or if a child is going to be absent. Failure to do so results in fees being charged as per their regular booking. If the position can be immediately filled from the waiting list the two weeks notice will not apply and no fees will be charged.

Casual bookings:

To allow for appropriate staffing levels to be maintained casual bookings may be cancelled but must be received by the service 24 working hours prior to the booking. For example if a child is booked in for a casual before school care session on a Tuesday then the booking must be cancelled by 7.30am on Monday. If the booking was for a Monday then the cancellation needs to be made by 7.30am Friday. In the case of an after school care booking then the cancellation must be made by 3pm on the working day prior to the booking. Cancellations received less than 24 hours prior to the booking will be noted but charged at the casual rate.

ARRIVAL AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

FASC's responsibility commences upon the child's arrival in the afternoon and ceases when the child is signed out by a parent/guardian or authorised person.

Licensing requirements state that each child **must be signed in (Before School Care and Vacation Care) and out (After School Care and Vacation Care)** of the Centre by an authorised person (one stated on the child's enrolment form). This is done by recording the time and your signature on the attendance roll when you collect your child/ren from the Centre. If another adult is to collect your child/ren, written permission must be given beforehand - you can either add the person to your authorised collection list on your enrolment form or use the collection book at the centre for one off arrangements

Under no circumstances will a child be allowed to leave FASC without being signed out unless their parent/guardian has given written permission for them to do so.

PAYMENT OF FEES

Fees are due fortnightly on odd weeks of the term for example week 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9

Invoices are prepared on a fortnightly basis by the Bookkeeper (North Belconnen Community Association) and must be collected from the After School Care office. They are filed under the family name of the parent who is registered for Childcare Benefit. For account enquiries please contact Joe or Sally on 62591879.

Parents are responsible for collecting accounts.

Accounts will be charged two weeks in advance. Payment is due fortnightly on odd weeks of the term for example week 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9.

² http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/childcare/families-priority_of_access.htm

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Accounts that are overdue will incur a late payment fee (policy included below) of \$20 unless prior arrangements have been made with the Bookkeeper or Director.

Your statement shows both charges to your account and payments made. Receipts are only issued for cash payments.

Payment options:

- **Internet banking or direct deposit** see below for more details
- **Automatic deduction from credit card** complete details at the end of the enrolment form
- **Eftpos and credit card** facilities available at the FASC office
- **Cheque** (payable to "Forrest After School Care or FASC") please put the account name on back of the cheque
- **Cash** – please pay at the office. **Please note that for security reasons cash is our least preferred option.** *CASH PAYMENTS MUST BE RECEIPTED AND COLLECTED BY THE DIRECTOR.*

Bank Account:	Forrest School Parents & Citizens Association Inc – After School Care
Bank:	Westpac
Address:	Petrie Plaza, Canberra ACT
BSB No:	032719
Account No:	219106
Account Type:	Society Cheque
If using internet banking please use account name and not simply fees so we can credit your payment into the correct account.	
If you set up your direct debit as a continuous process each week/fortnight/month, would you please advise of the arrangement made.	

Late Fee Payment Policy

Revised: 12 May 2006

Purpose

To ensure that fees are paid on time and that FASC parents are aware of their responsibilities to pay their fees by the due date.

Policy

- 1 Parents are to be encouraged to take advantage of direct debit and credit card payment options. Parents should also be aware that it is their responsibility to notify the FASC Director if their credit card details change which will affect payments.
- 2 Any client having difficulties paying fees should contact the FASC Director or Bookkeeper as soon as possible.
- 3 If any account is more than one week overdue, the Bookkeeper will send a letter to the client:
 - (a) informing them that the account is a week overdue; and
 - (b) notifying them that an administrative cost of \$20 will be applied to their account, and that this will increase by another \$20 for each billing period (fortnight) until the overdue account is paid in full.

ILLNESS

If your child is sick while attending the Centre you will be contacted immediately by phone. Facilities to cope with sick children are extremely limited and it is in the best interest of your child to be collected from the Centre as soon as possible. Children with infectious diseases will be excluded as per the Infectious diseases chart displayed at the centre.

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LATE COLLECTION

If your child/ren are not collected by 6pm, a late collection fee of \$15.00 for every 15 minutes or part thereof will be incurred.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

If your child has an accident while attending the Centre and requires first aid it will be administered by a qualified staff member. You will be informed of any such incidents by the Director upon collection of your child and asked to sign the accident report.

In the event of a serious accident or whereby the Director or qualified persons deems necessary, an ambulance will be called. Every effort will be made to advise you immediately. A member of staff will remain with your child until you arrive at the hospital. Any medical or ambulance costs incurred will be met by you.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

At Forrest After School Care we aim to provide children with an enjoyable environment in which they feel comfortable and safe. This includes a comprehensive behaviour management policy that promotes children feeling comfortable; are able to accept responsibility for their own behaviour; and to develop a high self esteem. The behaviour management policy aims to reflect the school's behaviour management policy where applicable. If a child's behaviour is inappropriate then the staff will advise the Director of this. When it is necessary the Director will discuss this with the parents and a behaviour report will be completed. Parents will be given the opportunity to sign this and also make comments. For more information refer to FASC policy document.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Forrest After School Care is run by a Parent Management Committee which is part of the Forrest P&C. Meetings are held throughout the year. All parents are welcome to attend.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

FASC acknowledges that families are very busy and attempts to make communication efficient. Communication takes many forms and includes;

- Brief notes on the bottom of accounts
- General email bulletins that are sent as bulk emails to all parents – via email mailing list hosted by svana.org
- Brief email notes to individual parents
- FASC section in the school newsletter
- "The Forrest Times" FASC newsletter
- Posters, pamphlets and notes on the roll at the service
- Face to face contact with parents
- Staff notice board adjacent to FASC office and information board opposite FASC office

There are a variety of community resources available from the FASC office for parents to access.

If you wish to talk with centre staff, please do. Sometimes staff are busy supervising children and it may be more appropriate to make an appointment if you wish to have an uninterrupted conversation. These can be arranged for either before 3pm or later in the afternoon at a time suitable to both parties.

ACTIVITIES

A range of different activities are available each afternoon in which children may participate. These activities include art, craft, cooking, drama, sport, inside games, outside games, soft equipment and competitions. The daily program of activities is written on a white board and displayed for you to read as you collect your child/ren.

AFTERNOON TEA

Children are served afternoon tea upon their arrival each afternoon. The menu changes daily and seasonally. The menu may include foods such as a variety of home made soups, dips, pastas, sandwiches, and other freshly prepared items. A selection of fresh fruit (for example pineapple, rock melon, apple, watermelon, orange and pear) is available everyday throughout the afternoon. Check the menu on the FASC kitchen door.

SENIORS' CLUB

Seniors' Club is a special club for children in years 4, 5 and 6. Membership to this club allows children to participate in exclusive activities, use exclusive equipment and attend excursions and other special events.

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HOMework

The Centre has a Homework Area which is open on most afternoons until 4.15pm. Children are reminded that the area is available but it is the child's responsibility to make use of it.

KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN

At the beginning of the school year a staff member will be given the responsibility of ensuring that kindergarten children settle into FASC quickly. For the first two weeks a staff member will collect your child from their classroom and take them directly to FASC.

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS or FEEDBACK

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to speak to the Director or to the Management Committee. We would also appreciate feedback – both positive and negative. We can be contacted by phone 62958985 or email forrestasc@optusnet.com.au There is also a suggestion box at the after school care office that can be used by parents and children.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We welcome parent involvement in our service. If you have an activity that the children would enjoy doing we welcome visitors to the service. Other ways that parents can be involved in our service is with donations of craft, food and other supplies that we can use in our day to day operation.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

FASC believes that children, parents and staff have an important role in the centre and we value their comments. FASC aims to ensure that children, parents and staff feel free to communicate any concerns they have in relation to the centre, staff, management, programs or policies without fearing negative consequences. Our priority is to do everything possible to improve the quality of our service and to resolve any complaint or grievance promptly.

- We will support a child's, parents or staff members right to complain and will help them to make their complaints clear and try to resolve them.
- A complaint can be informal or formal. It can be anything which a child, parent or staff member thinks is unfair or which makes them unhappy with the service.
- Every family and staff member will be provided with clear written guidelines detailing the grievance procedure, in the relevant handbook.
- All confidential conversations with a child, parent or staff member will take place away from the Centre.
- If a child, parent or staff member has a complaint or comment about the service, they are encouraged to talk to the Director who will arrange a time to discuss their concern and come to a resolution to address the issue.
- If the complaint is not handled to the complainant's satisfaction at this level they should discuss the issue with the Management committee, either in writing or verbally.
- The Management will discuss the issue with the Director and develop a strategy for resolving the problem, this would be discussed further with the complainant or if necessary a meeting will be organised with the Director and complainant to resolve the problem.
- The complaint is to be recorded and dated indicating the issue of concern and how it was resolved.
- The Director or Management will inform the complainant of what has been decided regarding the issue. All other relevant parties will also be informed of any relevant issues that they need to address or be aware of.
- This could be done verbally or if the issue has been dealt with on a more formal basis then the Management or Director will write personally to the complainant.
- If any complaint cannot be resolved internally to the consumer's satisfaction, external options will be offered such as an unbiased third party.