

# Outback Childcare



SOUTH AUSTRALIA



## Outback Childcare handbook for Parents

A helpful information pack to help parents understand the Outback Childcare Program.

Remote and Isolated Children's Exercise

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# Welcome to Outback Childcare!

At RICE, our mission is to ensure children in Outback South Australia have access to quality education and care services, which are not readily available to them due to their geographical location. Care will be offered children between the ages of 0-12 years of age.

Outback Childcare is a program solely funded by RICE. The program employs educators to deliver live-in care for families who are unable to access mainstream childcare programs.

To be eligible for access to the program, at least one of the following criteria must apply:

- Families in rural and remote areas of South Australia for whom childcare services are limited by distance or availability.
- Access to care is determined on work, work related, study and / or respite care needs.
- Care provided for children aged between 0-12 years.
- The work hours of the child's guardian are hours when no other approved care is available.
- The child's guardian is caring for three or more children who have not yet started school.
- Families in isolated farming areas may also access the Outback Childcare program; however access to care for these families, is by individual application to the Director and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Care will be offered in these areas ONLY when carers are not booked to provide care in the pastoral areas.

## ***Key points for Parents:***

- Open communication between educators and parents is encouraged to share information regarding the child, their routines, health, food preferences, interests, behaviour, and milestones.
- Parents and Educators are encouraged to communicate with the RICE in relation to how the care placement is progressing and to contribute ideas concerns on the service.
- Educators on placement are required keep in regular contact with RICE Management.
- In the circumstances that an educator becomes ill prior to attending placement, the Director will attempt to ensure that the care will still take place. There may be times when placement cannot be back filled.
- Parents are required to give as much notice as possible if they wish to terminate the care arrangement.
- Educators will support all children with their development by providing engaging, stimulating, and challenging activities. All documentation collected by an educator will be kept confidential and learning stores can be accessed by parents on Story Park.
- RICE works in accordance with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) to provide high quality childcare. The framework encourages play based learning that is engaging and allows children to learn through play.
- All records are legal documents; they are to be kept clear and concise. Should an error occur, white out is not acceptable, a line through the error and initials from the parent/caregiver and educator may be needed.

## ***Policies/ accident and injury:***

- Educators have a complete set of service policies, procedures and other documentation for use during care, including first aid, accident report forms and swimming approval. Please make sure all forms are sighted, signed, and explained to you prior to care commencing and ending.
- The Educator must act on behalf of the child's well-being first and foremost.
- During an accident/injury the child's immediate needs are taken care of, the Educator will contact the child's parents and the RICE Director.

**Booked hours:**

- Educators normal rostered hours are from 8:00 am to 4:06 pm, Monday to Friday not including Public Holidays. Educators will be provided with a 30-minute unpaid break, no later than 5 hours are commencing their shift.
- Alternative hours or weekend work may be negotiated between the family, Director and Educator. These requests will be dealt with at the discretion of the Director and on a case-by-case basis.
- Hours and days of care must be clearly outlined and agreed upon clearly **before** placement occurs.
- Travel to and from the property will be included in the request for care.
- Bookings will be for a minimum of four (4) days and a maximum of ten (10) days.
- Care provided will be capped at a maximum of four (4) children.

**Change of details:**

- It is the Parent's individual responsibility to advise RICE of any changes to their address, phone number, work, or family structure, contact numbers and emergency information. Please inform the RICE of changes as soon as possible.

**Fee structure:**

- Care will be charged at \$15 an hour for the first child and \$5 an hour for each additional child i.e., for 3 children, care will be calculated at \$25 per hour. If families find they cannot meet this, they are advised to contact the Director to discuss payment arrangements. Any support offered will be at the discretion of the Director and the family will need to discuss their individual circumstances.
- All fees are to be paid in full, prior to receiving any further care.

**\*\*Outback Childcare South Australia is solely funded by RICE.  
This program IS NOT Government funded or subsidised in any way. \*\***

**Dignity and rights of the child**

- Outback Childcare upholds the dignity and rights of each child to learn and grow in a supportive and engaging environment.
- Educators are required to uphold this standard in all interactions with children in their care and in keeping with family values and attitudes.

**Child protection:**

- Outback Educators are mandated reporters, should staff have reason to suspect abuse of a child it will be reported immediately. Families can refer to child protection policy.
- It is a requirement of employment that Educators are to successfully complete RRHAN-EC training and are required by law to report suspicions of abuse or neglect.

**Clothing and Sun Smart:**

- Both children and Educators will wear hats and apply sunscreen during all outside times. Children should be clothed suitably for play, comfort, and seasonal requirements. A supply of spare clothing should be available for each child when changing is required.
- Outback Childcare will protect children's safety in the sun, to ensure their play is not limited due to weather conditions.
- Please refer to the clothing policy accessible through RICE.

**Cleanliness:**

- Educators are not to take on cleaning duties for families. The cleaning of utensils, toys, floor and bench surfaces, clothing related to the direct care of the children is required of the Educator.
- Educators will maintain high standards of hygiene especially in relation to food, toileting and use of toys.
- The Educator will ensure the cleanliness of the child(ren) is maintained during placement.

- Environment cleanliness will be managed by the Educator, with regular tidy up periods throughout the day and the sterilizing of toys on a periodic basis to prevent cross infection.

***Complaints and grievances:***

Please refer to the complaints and grievances policy accessible through RICE.

***Enrolment/expression of interest for Outback Childcare:***

To register your interest and book care through the Outback Childcare program, please refer to the following:

- Families send email request to [admin@rice.org.au](mailto:admin@rice.org.au) or complete the online enquiry form via the RICE website to register interest, this is to be renewed annually.
- To be eligible for the Outback Childcare program, families are required to be financial members of RICE. This can be completed via the RICE website at: [www.rice.org.au](http://www.rice.org.au) and is to be renewed annually.
- Once your interest has been registered, families will be sent an information pack regarding fees, COVID-19, risk assessments and child information forms, which are to be completed by the family.
- When the required documentation is completed and returned to the RICE office, the booking is made official.
- The Educator and/or coordinator will contact the family via email or phone and will maintain regular contact until placement.

***First aid/emergency medical aid:***

All households using Outback Childcare must have First Aid Kit, kept in a position that is out of reach of children but readily accessible. The kit should comprise a comprehensive range of first aid material.

***Evacuation plan/fire safety:***

- All families must have a written fire and emergency evacuation plan which is discussed with the Educator and practiced regularly with the children.
- A visible display of fire/emergency evacuation exits are also mandatory and in accordance with the National Standards for Childcare. These should also be provided to the service within the care request form.
- In the event of an emergency an educator must never leave children unless they are in the care of their parents, authorized adult/emergency contact, another staff member.
- A risk assessment completed by the family detailing evacuation, fire and lockdown procedures.
- Accommodation and station photos should also be provided by the family prior to placement.

***Medication:***

- All medication must be authorised by a parent by using a medication form prior to administration by the educator.
- Medical conditions such as anaphylaxis and asthma need to be reassessed by a health care professional every 12 months, to ensure currency of medications and so a care plan can be put into place. Care plans are to be provided by parents to RICE prior to placement.
- Medical conditions should be thoroughly discussed between Educator and the family before and during placement.
- Medication must be kept in a childproof location which is easily accessible for adults. Families are to show educators on orientation where medication is kept.

***Nappies:***

- Parents decide what type of nappies are used within the household and will provide all products.
- Please refer to the Nappy change procedure, which is accessible through RICE.

**Record of care:**

Educators use various documents throughout each day to keep a record of care, some include:

- Sleep and wake times
- Medication forms
- Nappy changes/toileting
- Sign in and sign out
- Sunscreen Application

**Rest arrangements:**

- Educators will follow the routines governed by the parent.
- Educators follow SIDS and KIDS Safe sleep program.
- Educators will physically check regularly on each child who is resting or sleeping.

**Supervision:**

- Outback Childcare's will provide a safe and secure environment for all children in care.
- Visual supervision is required unless in exceptional circumstances when the educator is required to attend to a child who is not in the same immediate area as the other children. In these circumstances, auditory supervision of out – of – sight of children is essential.
- Nonvisual supervision should always be kept to a minimum.
- Educators must not allow children in care to access any area that is not documented in the care plan.
- Educators must remain awake and alert during the time that children are in care. f
- Throughout the duration of childcare hours, educators must remain vigilant to their childcare responsibilities, and domestic chores must not be performed other than to maintain WHS standards such as mopping spillage from floor.
- When providing care for school aged children the children will always be in an area of the home or garden where visual supervision is able to be maintained.
- Children who are eating and drinking, (including babies who are bottle fed) will always be visually supervised and never unattended, as choking is often silent.

**Activities:**

The following activities as follows, are not permitted whilst the child(ren) are in the care of the Educator:

- Swimming of any kind, including but not limited to swimming pools, dams, creeks.
- Operating of heavy machinery, including but not limited to motorbikes, cars.
- Riding of animals including but not limited to horses, sheep, cattle.

**Travelling:**

- Educators are not permitted to travel outside of the general family home.
- An educator cannot be left alone on the property with children while on placement.
- Parents must not leave the station/property while the children are in the educator's care.
- Requests for an Educator to travel with a family to locations such as Adelaide, or away from the family property, will not be approved.

**Meals and accommodation:**

- The Family will provide the Educator with meals throughout each day and appropriate on-site accommodation during placement. If the family does not agree, alternative arrangement will be made at the family's expense.

**COVID-19**

- In accordance with the Emergency Management (Education and Early Childhood Settings Vaccination No 2) (COVID-19) Direction, RICE faculty are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.
- COVID-19 is an everchanging situation, individual communication will be updated dependent on the current Government guidelines and regulations in place.

**Resource Library:**

Parents and Educators are welcome to access the Resource Library housed at the RICE office. Upon request, resource boxes can be packed and mailed to families, which can be on loan for up to 2 months before being mailed back to the RICE office. All toys must be returned in good care and be clean.

Document History	Version No	Issue Date	Description of Change:
	1	Jan 2022	Sent to Board for review
	1.1	Feb 2022	Changes reviewed & accepted