



# **Ralston Out of School Care**

## **Parents Handbook**

### **December 2008**

## **Forward**

Ralston Out of School Care came into being in 1994. The need for the service was first highlighted by parent Mrs Clare Carson and, with the cooperation and support from the then Head Teacher of Ralston Primary Mrs Sheena Andrew, the service was founded. It opened its doors in August of that year with no more than 6 children and the enthusiasm of the founder members and new staff to keep it going.

Today our service has expanded somewhat from its inception and now has the provision to care for up to 90 children, offering both a morning and after school service during the school term with a fulltime service in place for holiday periods. A highly trained and professional team look after the children in our care. Our Service Manager, Depute Manager and staff are all committed to providing a fun, stimulating and secure environment for our children.

The service is, and always has been, a registered charity run by a Committee made up of the parents whose children attend the service. Fees charged to families using the service, together with government funding and various grants secured each year, all go to funding the service.

ROSC is considered to be in the top bracket of Out of School service providers in Renfrewshire District, a fact we can all be extremely proud of.

With continued support from parents, staff, the Head Teacher of Ralston Primary and Renfrewshire Council, we can all look to a bright and successful future.

Stephen Davidson  
Chairperson ROSC

## Introduction

Welcome to the Ralston Out of School Care parents handbook. The purpose of this book is to give you all the information you need to know while your child is attending the out of school care. It will give you a brief history of the service, explain our key policies and procedures and provide you with some useful documents and contact details you will require while your child attends the service. This handbook by no means has all the answers and as always if you have any questions or feedback please don't hesitate to contact me at the service. I hope this handbook proves useful and that your children's time with us is both fun and productive.



Grace Berry  
Service Manager

## What we offer

We offer an out of school care service for primary school children and those in secondary one and two. We have 60 places between 3.15pm and 6.00pm and 30 places in our sessions before school. We also offer a play scheme during the summer holidays the Easter holidays and the October week.

We offer a variety of activities including trips, sports, games, computer games and arts and crafts. We also organise a summer show every year and run special events for Christmas and Halloween



Staff members with children on a trip

## **Mission Statement**

We at Ralston Out of School Care aim to offer Out of School Care and holiday care to children of school age up to the age of 14 years old. We aim to offer play and education opportunities that are both fun and challenging. We will promote the dignity, privacy, choice, safety, potential and diversity of all users and staff of the club.

We will achieve this in the following way:

### ***To the children***

We aim to provide a safe, happy and comfortable environment for children, emphasising the social cultural and educational welfare of each child as an individual.

### ***To the parents***

We aim to provide a quality and flexible service designed to help meet the needs of working parents. We will strive to maintain a policy of responding promptly to concerns, complaints or suggestions from parents.

### ***To the staff***

We aim to provide sufficient training support and supervision to ensure all staff can carry out their role to their full potential and with maximum job satisfaction. We will maintain regular staff meetings and appraisals when possible.

### ***In General ROSC Will:***

Promote policies and procedures that promote its Aims in practice and make these known to all staff, parents, children and young people.

Contribute to its local community and will develop links with services and organisations that will assist our aims.

Provide a balanced range of activities, taking into account of the ages, development needs, interests and hours and pattern of attendance of each child and young person.

Encourage parents, children and young people to contribute to the life and work of the club and promote positive behaviour at all times.

Be open and transparent in all of its activities.

Take into account of local, national and SOSCEN guidance in its activities.

Operate a self-evaluation scheme as a means of ensuring continuous improvement and will involve all staff and users in this process.

Supervise the activities of its staff through formal supervision and development programmes.

## **Admissions Policy**

Parents wanting their children to attend Ralston Out of School Care should complete and return the Application Pack. Ralston out of School Care is registered for 60 children per day. If places are unavailable the application will be added to a waiting list the following criteria will be used to issue places.

- 1st priority for new entrants is given to children who have an older sibling already registered with ROSC.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> priority will be length of time on the waiting list
- 3<sup>rd</sup> priority goes to entrants who require a full time space.
- 4<sup>th</sup> priority goes to entrants who can be accommodated with a part time position.

We will also work closely with any outside agency who feel it is beneficial for a child to attend due to circumstances pertaining to the child's welfare.

When a space is allocated to a child the parent will be contacted and a start date agreed. A contact and standing order will be sent out and must be completed before a child can start. Once a start date has been agreed the child's class teacher will be notified.

We have an open door policy for any parent/guardian who wishes to view ROSC. They are able to ask questions, read over policies and check on what resources and activities their child will be offered.

When a new child attends ROSC for the first time we will make sure that they feel welcomed as part of the group and provide a buddy system until they feel confident enough with their surroundings.



Staff, children and volunteers on a sponsored walk to raise money for a special trip!

## Escort and Collection of Children

The operating hours of Ralston Out of School care are 8.00am-9.00am for the morning sessions and 3.15pm – 6.00pm for the afternoon sessions

All children must be signed in by parent /guardian.

During Morning sessions ROSC staff will supervise children until 8.55am in the ROSC room. At this time all children will be taken to their collection point. This is in keeping with current school policy. No children are allowed to go to class prior to 9.00am as teachers will not be present. All ROSC children will be supervised, at all times, by OSC staff until 9.00am when they are collected by teaching staff. The schools policy is that the collection point will be outside the school in reasonable weather. In the event of poor weather the collection point will be inside the school.

The names of children attending the afternoon session are posted outside their classrooms in the morning and ROSC staff retain their own copies of these lists.

P.1 - 3 are collected from their class at 3.15pm by ROSC staff.

P.4 - 7 are expected to make their own way to the ROSC room where they will be greeted by ROSC staff.

All children must be signed out by named signatory when collected from ROSC unless previously agreed by parent / guardian and project manager.



A popular trip to the local fire station

## **Ralston OSC Confidentiality Policy**

During the course of its work Ralston Out of School Care will collect information in relation to the children in its care. We will actively promote the confidentiality of such information in the following way

- Confidentiality rests with Out of School care as a whole and not with any individual.
- All information pertaining to children and staff in the after school care will be kept locked in a secure place.
- No information will be disclosed to a third party unless required to do so in a matter of child protection.
- Breach of confidentiality without a good reason is a disciplinary matter.
- All relevant legislation regarding to the keeping of information will be adhered to.
- Staff will be advised on how to record information and how to deal with confidential or sensitive information. (See staff policies: confidentiality)
- Access to a child's records will be provided to parents/carers.
- Access to a staff members records will be provided to that staff member

## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

OSC will actively promote the principles of social diversity, choice, safety and dignity

- All staff, children and parents will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of age, gender, religion, sexuality, ability and ethnic background.
- Staff will be trained to recognise and challenge discrimination, bullying and abuse.
- An environment of equality will be created by the staff that is free from bullying harassment and discrimination.
- Issues of equal opportunity and discrimination will be considered when planning programmes of activities
- Staff will challenge any discriminatory behaviour and encourage children to treat all people with respect.
- Staff will consult with children and parents and value opinions expressed.
- The Manager will monitor admissions waiting lists recruitment and staff to ensure the policy is being carried out.

## **Child Protection Policy: Summary**

Ralston OSC aim to ensure that all children in our care have fun in a safe and caring environment. It is the responsibility of the Manager and Play Carers to protect the children for all forms of abuse and discrimination as far as possible.

This policy aims to ensure that all staff are informed about child abuse, the forms it can take, recognition, steps to take in recognition and prevention.

As a first step towards this Ralston OSC staff and premises are vetted through the relevant authorities, personal references are taken up for all staff and a check is made for criminal records.

### **What is Child Abuse?**

It is a distressing fact of life that not all adults, for whatever reason, conform to what society regards as acceptable ethical standards in their relationships with children. Child abuse is the term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults, and often by people they know and trust.

### **Recognition of Abuse**

ROSC workers responsibilities lie not in identifying the abuse, but rather in reporting concerns to the appropriate bodies. All ROSC staff complete regular training to identify possible signs of child abuse.

### **Procedure**

If you have direct evidence or suspicion of child abuse then the only way you can protect the child or children is to report the matter immediately. You must ensure that your ongoing involvement is in each child's interests.

If a member of staff or other involved adults have cause for concern they should immediately report to the service manager or appointed deputy. Proof is not required.

The person-in-charge should:-

- Treat the grounds for concern as a priority for action.
- Consider immediate needs of all children involved.
- Take emergency action if required e.g. Police or Medical Services
- Immediately report to the duty senior social worker at the social work area office all cases where you have grounds for concern about child protection. Discuss with the duty senior social worker for action (if any) to be taken. Including when and by whom parents will be informed.
- Ask staff to immediately record relevant information. The record should be dated and signed.
- Store all details in a confidential file.
- Maintain confidentiality and discretion at all times.
- Co-operate fully with all statutory agencies that may become involved.
- Support the child or children involved as necessary and appropriate.

## **Health and Safety Policy**

Ralston OSC sees the health and safety of the children in its care as paramount importance. In response to this we will ensure the following:

- Staff and management will provide a safe and healthy environment for the children in its care.
- All legislation relating to Health and safety will be implemented and monitored by management.
- The premises will be kept in a hygienic, smoke free state and will be kept in good repair.
- Furniture and equipment will be checked and kept clean and well maintained by the staff. This will be done on a daily basis and then signed off the 'Risk Assessment' folder.
- Staff will take precautions to control the spread of infections, staff will be expected to identify and reduce the risks by providing a safe and hygienic environment and adhering to Renfrewshire Council's Health and Safety Policies.
- Children will be taught and encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles including hygiene, exercise, diet and personal safety.
- That all required reporting procedures are in place including accident book and child protection policy
- All staff know of the clear guidelines for the storing and administration of medicine
- All food is properly prepared in a hygienic way and that it provides a well balanced diet
- Children are not allowed mobile phones, cameras or any other recording equipment on the floor. All such equipment must be held by a member of staff until the child leaves ROSC.
- Children will have regular access to fresh air and physical activity.
- Staff are trained in health and safety procedures and know what to do in an emergency.
- Regular risk assessment will be carried out on premises, equipment and activities.
- Regular fire drills will be conducted.

## **Feedback Policy and Complaint Procedure**

Children, parents and staff should be able to complain or make suggestions effectively with out fear of victimisation. To achieve this we will:

- Promote an environment of mutual respect, trust and open communication
- Treat everyone equally, fairly and with the utmost confidentiality
- Provide opportunities for children, parents and staff to be consulted and their views recorded and valued.
- Produce and promote a complaints procedure with access to an independent arbiter if needed.
- Train staff in the handling of complaints and suggestions.
- Record all complaints and suggestions whether made formally or informally
- Provide a private area for children and parents to discuss matters with staff.
- Provide the Care Commission with information on the Out of School Cares response to complaints as and when requested to do so.

At Ralston Out of School Care we are committed to providing a high quality service.

Minor complaints should be made in the first instance to a member of staff or the Depute Manager if preferred who will record the matter.

If the matter is not dealt with satisfactorily or the matter is more serious it can be reported to the manager. Complaints may be put in writing to the manager in which case a response will be made within 48 hours.

If the matter has still not been resolved the complainant can raise the issue with the Management Committee who manage the service. A response will be made within 48 hours.

At any time the matter can be brought before the Care Commission. The time scale for meeting a complaint is 28 days after the complaint is made.

The manager will provide any information in writing required by a complainant on the complaints procedure.

## **Closure Policy**

If due to any circumstance that the ROSC needs to close down the following procedure will be followed.

- Parents will be notified with as much notice as possible. This would be by telephone, email or letter to make sure all parents are notified.
- If possible any refunds due will be paid out when the finances of the project are wound up.
- Any equipment will be donated to local community groups or another out of school care.

## **Behaviour Management**

It is the ethos of Ralston OSC to promote positive behaviour and personal and social development of all the children attending.

All negative behaviour shall be challenged by staff in a unified approach aimed at positive resolution. Appropriate sanctions shall be used where necessary and time shall be spent to explain consequences of the negative behaviour displayed and how that behaviour may affect others. All behavioural issues and concerns shall be raised with parents and that it is important that parents, children and staff work together to resolve any difficulties.

The project welcomes the input of parents and the project manager shall be available to discuss any issues raised.

Staff will work in partnership with parents and children to identify child's interests, strengths and needs to help deal with behavioural modifications

## **Useful Contact Details**

Ralston Out of School Care  
C/o Ralston Primary School  
School Road  
Paisley  
PA1 3AT



Telephone with answer machine: 0141 882 5230

Email: [Graceberry60@hotmail.com](mailto:Graceberry60@hotmail.com)

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