Outside School Hours Care   
(OSHC) Establishment Grant  
Initiative

Round 3 Application Guidelines

**June 2022**

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# 1. Introduction

The Department of Education and Training (the Department) has developed these guidelines to support Round 3 applicants to apply for a grant through the **Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Establishment Grant initiative**.

Over four rounds the Department is providing to 400 grants to government schools delivering primary aged education to establish new OSHC programs. The initiative aims to provide access to OSHC services for 95% of Victorian government primary school students.

**100 grants** are available as part of **Round 3**, with successful schools eligible to receive two yearly payments of $75,000 in 2023 and 2024. Additional funds are available for specialist schools or schools located in outer regional or remote areas.

There are many government schools that do not currently offer OSHC services. Access to OSHC services is particularly limited in rural and regional areas, in small schools and in specialist school settings. The establishment of new OSHC services will support parents and carers to increase their participation in work, study, training or re-enter the workforce.

## Background

Launched in late 2020 as part of the *2020 COVID-19 Recovery Budget,* the OSHC Establishment Grant initiative provides grant funding to Victorian government schools delivering primary aged education without an existing OSHC program.

OSHC, where available, provides education and care for children outside school hours and during school holidays. By relieving parents of caring responsibility, OSHC facilitates workforce participation, particularly for women who are more likely to reduce the hours they work to care for children.

There are a significant number of Victorian children and families who are unable to access an OSHC service in their local community. In 2020, approximately 62% of Victorian government primary schools delivered on-site OSHC programs. To address the uneven access to OSHC services, the Andrews Labor Government is investing $81.6 million over four years (2021-2024) to support the establishment of new OSHC services at up to 400 Victorian government schools.

# 2. OSHC Establishment Grants

The OSHC Establishment Grant initiative aims to improve the availability of OSHC services across Victoria, ensuring that all children and families can access programs on their school site or in their local area. The Youth Participation Unit (YPU) in Schools and Regional Services manages the grants program, including the application process, assisting successful recipients to manage their grant application, and supporting schools to set up and deliver their OSHC services.

**What is being funded?**

The OSHC Establishment Grant initiative has four applications rounds. Round 1 of the Initiative closed in February 2021, and Round 2 closed in September 2021.

In Round 3, the Department will provide grants of $75,000 to support the establishment of new OSHC services, expansion of existing OSHC services to provide new OSHC sessions, or access to existing OSHC off-site, for at least 100 school sites. Schools that successfully receive a grant in Round 3 will receive two yearly payments, in March 2023 and 2024

Where the grant application involves a cluster of school sites and/or multiple campuses of the same school, the total amount of funding increases to $75,000 per school or campus. For instance, if a service is established at one government school that also could be used by a second nearby government school, $150,000 is available to support both the delivery of the service but also transport from the second school.

In recognition of staffing challenges at certain types of schools to establish a financially viable OSHC service, additional funds are available to the following types of schools:

* $25,000 for schools located in an area designated as “Outer Regional” or “Remote” under the Accessibility and Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA+).
* $30,000 for specialist schools (note: a school cannot receive both the specialist and remote allowances).

Cap amounts are exclusive of GST.

Grants can be used towards establishment and operational costs, including any of the following:

* Staffing costs (wages/salary and benefits) of educators and administration staff.
* Licence or accreditation fees, e.g. regulatory approval of the service.
* Program management and administration costs.
* Resources and/or equipment, e.g. toys, games, art supplies, sports equipment, books.
* Transport (for both government and non-government students).
* Food provision.
* Programs/activities to attract or retain enrolments, including incursions and excursions.

Rent or hire fees (if the service is proposed to run off school premises).

* Training and professional development:
  + supporting educators to obtain required qualifications
  + professional development for staff involved in the delivery of services
  + networking or engaging with other services or professional bodies
  + purchasing training in specific areas relevant to service's needs (i.e. Indigenous children, cultural awareness training).
* Facility upgrades required to deliver an OSHC program, e.g. built-in storage, minor renovations, purchasing appliances such as a washing machine, dryer, refrigerator, fencing or gates, gardening, or natural environment, play equipment, shade sails.

***Note: schools should discuss any proposed upgrades with their contact at the VSBA prior to applying. Any facility upgrades or other one-off costs will only be paid in the first grant payment, so schools are advised to allocate grant money for other purposes in the second year of funding.***

OSHC services established utilising grant funding are expected to charge a fee for service and seek rebates through the Commonwealth Child Care Subsidy (CCS) scheme. Where successful applicants are proposing OSHC programs that are delivered by third party providers, local arrangements can be negotiated to transfer funding.

Example budgets have been included in **Figure 1** to support you in developing your application. These examples also detail the funding categories and limits.

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| Figure 1- Example BudgetsBudget example 1 – single school application A single school can apply for up to $75,000. As part of the application process, schools are required to outline how they propose to spend the funding, with the expenditure broken down by category, i.e. the cost of an educator/coordinator would fall into the “Staffing costs” category.  **<NAME> PRIMARY SCHOOL OSHC ESTABLISHMENT GRANT BUDGET**   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Funding category | Description | Cost | | STAFFING | 1 x staff member as coordinator, incl. salary and on-costs | $66,641 | | LICENCE FEES | Regulatory authority annual fee | $211 | | FOOD | Groceries for food preparation | $4,399 | | PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES | Art/craft equipment | $1,000 | |  | Sports equipment | $1,500 | | FACILITIES UPGRADE | Additional maintenance | $4,000 | | **TOTAL** | | **$75,000** |  Budget example 2 – multiple school (cluster) application This is an example budget for a grant application for two eligible government schools applying together in a cluster arrangement, with the higher cap of $150,000. Note that while a school may partner with one or more non-government schools to deliver a service, eligibility for the increased amount of funding requires at least two eligible government schools in the cluster.  **<NAME> PRIMARY SCHOOL OSHC ESTABLISHMENT GRANT BUDGET**   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Funding category | Description | Cost | | STAFFING | 1 staff member as coordinator, incl. salary and on-costs | $66,641 | | STAFFING | 1 part-time staff member as educator | $33,321 | | PROF. DEVELOPMENT | Certificate III qualification for 2nd educator | $3,480 | | LICENCE FEES | Regulatory authority annual fee | $318 | | FOOD | Groceries for food preparation | $12,000 | | PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES | Art/craft equipment | $2,000 | |  | Sports equipment | $2,000 | | FACILITIES UPGRADE | Purchase of storage | $4,000 | |  | Maintenance cost, (e.g., re-flooring a classroom) | $3,000 | | TRANSPORT | Bus hire to transport children | $20,000 | | ADMIN/EQUIPMENT COSTS | Phone for coordinator | $1,200 | |  | Laptop computer for coordinator | $1,400 | |  | Phone bill/plan for coordinator | $640 | | **TOTAL** | | **$150,000** | |

## Funding exclusions

OSHC Establishment Grants cannot be used to fund any of the following:

* Activities not related to the delivery of OSHC services.
* Major capital expenses.
* Activities that have already occurred, such as a service that has already been established, or expansion to provide sessions of care that are already offered
* Transport other than from a school to an OSHC service, or for the purpose of an activity or excursion conducted by an OSHC service. That is, the funding cannot be used to transport children from home to OSHC or school.

# 3. Funding criteria

## Eligibility

Applicants must:

* Be a Victorian government school.
* Be delivering primary aged or special education (including primary schools, P-12 schools, specialist schools).
* Have permanent student enrolments.
* Not have been awarded a grant under a previous round of this initiative, including as a school involved in a cluster arrangement, unless the cluster arrangement is being dissolved.
* Fit one of the following categories:
  + the school does not currently have an OSHC service currently operating on any part of the school premises used for curriculum delivery
  + the school has an on-site OSHC service, but it does not offer each of before school care, after school care and vacation care (the school will need to demonstrate that existing provision is not sufficient to meet the school community’s needs) and wishes to do so.

In applying, schools will need to demonstrate the one or all of the following:

* There is demand for OSHC services amongst their school population and/or from neighbouring cluster schools (including the nature of that demand, e.g. before and after school care, holiday programs or both)
* That an OSHC service at their school would be unlikely to be viable without this grant funding.
* There is limited existing availability of OSHC services in their local area.
* The school is ready to commence delivery of an OSHC program by Term 1, 2023.
* The school is partnering with local government and/or non-government schools to increase the accessibility of their program.

## Assessment priorities

Applications will be assessed against detailed assessment criteria. Applications will be prioritised based on the initiative’s objectives, which include:

* Improving the availability of OSHC services across Victoria
* Supporting parents/carers, particularly women, to participate in the workforce.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Eligible group |
| *Priority 1* | * Schools in areas with limited or no OSHC services |
| *Priority 2* | * Schools where services are unlikely to be viable without grant funding |
| *Priority 3* | * Schools with demonstrated readiness to commence services by Term 1, 2023. * Schools with disadvantaged student cohorts |
| *Priority 4* | * Schools seeking to extend existing OSHC delivery |

## 

# 4. Considerations before applying

Applicants are encouraged to access the detailed information regarding establishing an OSHC service available in the [Policy and Advisory Library](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/outside-school-hours-care-decision-making-regarding-provision-oshc/policy).

Applicants should consider the following before applying.

## Demand for services

Applicants will be asked to demonstrate demand for OSHC services in their school and where applicable in neighbouring schools that are forming part of a cluster. It is recommended that schools undertake a brief survey of parents/carers seeking information regarding their OSHC preferences and likely usage, including:

* interest in before and after school care and/or school holiday programs
* number of days utilising services

This information can be used to inform the design of the OSHC program and identify costs, as well as to support the application.

Your school may wish to adapt the Template OSHC School Survey to gauge the need for OSHC in your school’s community.

Schools seeking to expand existing OSHC provision will also need to demonstrate that the existing program does not meet the school community’s needs. For instance, a school applying to add vacation care to the service operating on their premises would need to demonstrate that no other vacation care services in the area are able to meet demand from students at their school.

## Model of service delivery

Applicants should consider whether a **school council** or **third-party provided OSHC** service will best meet the needs of the school/s and the participating children and their families. There are a range of costs and benefits of each model of service delivery.

Schools are encouraged to commence conversations with key stakeholders, including school councils, potential OSHC providers, parents/carers, potential cluster schools to determine the most appropriate approach.

A training module for school councils which outlines the steps to be taken for both school council-delivered and third party-delivered services is available at <https://lms.learneyo.com/DETSC/>.

More information about **third-party providers** operating in your local area is available at:

* [Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) National Register](https://eduvic-my.sharepoint.com/Users/shannontyrer/Library/Containers/com.apple.mail/Data/Library/Mail%20Downloads/C8221BCF-1AA3-4E4D-9318-85671C794851/ACECQA%20National%20Register%20of%20providers%20and%20services)
* [Starting Blocks](https://www.startingblocks.gov.au/find-child-care/)
* [Child Care Finder](https://www.childcarefinder.gov.au/)

You can also contact [oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au) for assistance in finding providers in your area, although this team is not able to assist in the process to appoint one.

## Readiness to deliver

Applicants will be asked to demonstrate their readiness to commence OSHC delivery by Term 1, 2023. It is recommended that as part of conversations with key stakeholders, including school councils and potential OSHC providers, schools discuss possible timeframes for delivery. It is important to consider a range of factors that may delay service delivery including:

* Approval of a new provider (school council) and/or service with Quality Assessment and Regulations Division, Department of Education and Training (QARD).
* Procurement of a third-party provider to deliver OSHC services.
* Recruitment of staff.
* Development of appropriate cluster arrangements (for example, hiring a transport company to provide bus services).

Schools may consider developing a project plan, outlining timelines for key milestones to demonstrate preparedness to deliver services as soon as possible following the receipt of approved grant funding in Term 1, 2023.

There may be some exceptions to this timeframe where schools have a special case, i.e. if a school demonstrates a need to commence delivery earlier to meet existing need, or to commence later due to issues such as building works at the school.

## Possible cluster arrangements

Applicants should consider whether a cluster arrangement with neighbouring schools is appropriate and commence discussions with possible cluster schools. Clusters may be appropriate where:

* there are several schools located close together, making it feasible to transport students to access OSHC services
* there is insufficient demand for services at each school to make individual services viable
* there are pre-existing relationships between neighbouring schools.

Schools are encouraged to partner with both government and non-government schools to deliver OSHC programs. Please note that additional funding only applies where at least two eligible government schools are involved in the cluster. The lead school applying for the grant should provide evidence that any cluster schools agree to be part of the cluster, such as a signed letter on school letterhead. Schools are encouraged to discuss community needs with non-government schools. While a partnership with a non-government school does not increase the grant cap amount, it may increase the chance of establishing a viable service that will be sustainable following the conclusion of grant funding. In a cluster arrangement, children from the partner schools will have access to the service on an equal basis to the lead school, and each will be expected to promote the service. Any agreed expenses incurred by a partner school will be reimbursed by the lead school.

*Note: where an OSHC service will operate from one campus of a school but provide the service to another campus of the same school, this school may also apply as a cluster and be eligible for $75,000 per campus to cover both the costs of the service and transport. The school could also submit a single application to fund separate services at each campus.*

A cluster could also include a combination of multiple schools and multiple campuses.

# 5. How to apply

SmartyGrants is an online grants administration program that the Department uses to facilitate the OSHC Establishment Grant initiative. Grant applications can only be submitted online via [SmartyGrants](https://youthparticipation.smartygrants.com.au/).

The applications for Round 3 will be open from **9am, Monday, 6 June 2022** and close at **midnight (after 11:59pm)** **Sunday, 24 July 2022.**

Applications must address each of the criteria. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Once you have submitted your online application through SmartyGrants, you will not be able to change it or submit any additional documentation through the online form. If you wish to submit additional information or change a response, you can email [oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au) and request that the form be reopened.

Applications will be assessed, and applicants notified as soon as practicable. Further advice will be provided during the application process. As part of the assessment process applicants may be contacted by phone to discuss their application.

## Successful applications

Approved grant funding will be allocated to schools through the Student Resource Package (SRP) via a cash payment in Term 2, 2023.

Successful applicants will also receive information regarding reporting and financial attestation requirements.

## Unsuccessful applications

Following the conclusion of the assessment process, unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications. All unsuccessful applications which meet the eligibility criteria will be automatically considered for funding in Round 4 of the grant application process.

# 7. Contact information

* For OSHC Establishment Grants enquiries and application support, please contact the OSHC Establishment Grants team, Youth Participation Unit:

Email: [oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au)

* For advice on the process for procuring a third party OSHC provider, please contact **Schools Procurement**:

Email: [schools.procurement@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:schools.procurement@education.vic.gov.au)

* For advice regarding licensing agreements between your school and a third-party provider, please contact **Legal Services.**

Email: [legal.services@education.vic.giv.au](mailto:legal.services@education.vic.giv.au)

* For information about provider/service approval requirements, please contact the **Quality Assurance and Regulation Division (QARD):**

Ph: 1300 307 415

Email: [licensed.childrens.services@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:licensed.childrens.services@education.vic.gov.au)

* For information about Child Care Subsidy (CCS) or the PRODA portal, please contact the **Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE)**.

Email: [ccs.assessment@dese.gov.au](mailto:ccs.assessment@dese.gov.au)

Website: [https://www.dese.gov.au/child-care-package/child-care-subsidy](https://www.dese.gov.au/child-care-package/child-care-subsidy/applying-child-care-subsidy-approval)

# Appendix A – Frequently Asked Questions

## Eligibility

**Can my school apply if we have previously had an OSHC program that is no longer operating?**

Yes. If the service operated in the preceding two terms, information as to why it ceased operating will be required.

**Can my school apply if we have already started the process to establish an OSHC?**

Yes. If you have taken steps such as an Expression of Interest to find a provider, or your school council has applied for approval, you are eligible to apply until the service commences operation.

**Are schools with multiple campuses eligible?**

Yes. Separate campuses will be treated as distinct schools for the purposes of the grant. For instance, you can apply for the grant to establish an OSHC at a campus that does not already provide OSHC, or for costs to transport children from one campus to another to attend OSHC.

**Can I form a cluster with neighbouring non-government schools?**

Non-government schools can form part of cluster arrangements. However, only eligible government schools are considered when calculating the maximum amount of funding available.

**Can I partner or cluster with a long day care service or kindergarten?**

A long day care service would not count as an eligible school to form part of a cluster. However, you can apply for a grant to enable the school to access that service if it provides, or will provide, outside school hours care. For instance, the funding could be used to provide transport to a local long day care service or kindergarten which also provides OSHC. The funding can also be used to subsidise the provider of the long day care service or kindergarten for additional costs they have, such as staffing for additional hours and additional children attending.

## Applying for a grant

**Who should complete the application on behalf of a cluster?**

The lead school – the school that will be delivering the OSHC service on-site – should complete the application process. During the process of preparing the application, the lead school should seek relevant information from cluster schools, including information about demand for services, proposed transport options etc. The lead school should also provide evidence that the cluster schools have agreed to be part of the cluster, such as a signed letter on school letterhead outlining the agreement between the schools.

**What information needs to be supplied in the Funding Request section of the application?**

The information in this section is intended to show the cost of a full year of delivery of an OSHC program, up to $75,000 per eligible school, plus any additional funds available to special or remote schools. You must break the funding down by category or use. It is acceptable to have a single line item for staffing if no other expenditure is required to support the service. However, you cannot simply allocate the funding by who will receive it, i.e., you cannot allocate an amount just for the use of the provider with no description, as you must specify what it is intended to be used by the provider for.

If seeking to use a third party provider, they should be able to provide an itemised quote for your school.

SmartyGrants calculates the total amount of funding automatically by adding each line item entered. Any costs above the grant amount are expected to be met through fees or other sources of income, with the grant funding only helping towards the cost rather than covering the total expenditure.

If it is expected that establishing the service may cost more than the relevant cap, you may supply a full costing as an attachment to your application in SmartyGrants, but this is not required.

**How will I know if my application has been received?**

All applicants will receive a confirmation email when their application has been received. This will be sent to the primary email address given by the applicant during the application process. If you have applied, but have not received confirmation, please email [oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:youth.participation@education.vic.gov.au) to check if your application has been received.

**Will I have to re-apply for grant funding if my application was unsuccessful in the first or second round?**

All applications that were unsuccessful in Rounds 1 and 2 will automatically be considered in the third round of funding if they are eligible to apply under the current criteria. There is no need to re-apply. If you would like to withdraw your application, please email [oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:youth.participation@education.vic.gov.au).

## Funding

**How will the grant funding be paid out in cluster school arrangements?**

The lead school will receive the approved grant funding in Term 1, 2023 through an offline SRP cash payment. If there are costs incurred by cluster schools in the delivery of the OSHC program (for example the cost of transporting students), the cluster school should invoice the lead school for the amount.

**Can approved grant funding be paid directly to third-party providers?**

All approved grant funding will be paid to lead schools. The Department will not directly transfer funds to third-party OSHC providers. Where a Licence Agreement is entered into by the school and the provider, a specialised version of the template is available for grant schools which includes funding details and conditions.

**Can I spend funding on upgrades to the school?**

The OSHC Establishment Grant Initiative is not intended for this purpose, but it is possible that some works may be required to improve a room or part of the school to an acceptable standard for OSHC. However, as the grants in this initiative provide payment over multiple years, any amount allocated for one-off, up-front expenses can only be claimed in the first year. We recommend that funding be spent on ongoing or operating expenses wherever possible. If your budget includes one-off expenses, we may request that you advise what this amount of funding will be allocated to in the second year of grant funding. For instance, if you spend $10,000 on refurbishments, you could allocate an additional $10,000 to purchasing resources in the second year.

Prior to applying schools should contact the Victorian School Building Authority at [vsba.school.funded@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:vsba.school.funded@education.vic.gov.au) to discuss the proposed upgrades, and ensure they are following all relevant VSBA procedures.

**Can grant funding be used to pay the salary of a school council employed staff member?**

Yes. Grant funding can be used to cover the cost of an educator/s to deliver the OSHC service, including locally employed staff. It would be expected that any salary costs related to work undertaken to deliver the OSHC program. For example, if a staff member was employed for 20 hours a week in the OSHC program and undertook other duties for the school for another 20 hours per week, grant funding could be used to cover fifty per cent of their salary.

The funding could also be used to cover the cost of school employees who perform administrative work in supporting the service, such as a Business Manager who assists with processing invoices.

**How should I calculate the cost of a staff member to run an OSHC service?**

When considering the salary, you should consider the following:

* The anticipated size of the service.
* Whether the staff member will have managerial responsibility or budgetary oversight.
* The qualifications held by the staff member.

When deciding whether the role is 1.0 FTE or part time, consider which session types (before school care, after school care, vacation care) will be offered, and what non-contact hours the staff member will require for preparation, programming, critical reflection, or supporting and supervising other staff, if multiple are required

We recommend that staff members be engaged at a 0.8 FTE unless only after school care is offered, in which case 0.6 could be considered. If all of before school, after school and holiday care are provided, the role should be 1.0 FTE.

Based on the duties, a diploma-qualified staff member running a service would be generally recommended at ES Level 1, Range 2 or 3.

**What are the financial acquittal requirements for a school receiving a grant?**

Schools are required to acquit their grant expenditure yearly for the full term of the grant funding. For Round 3, schools will be required to acquit twice, once for each year (2023 and 2024). This will be required prior to receiving subsequent rounds of funding, i.e., the first payment will be acquitted in Term 1, 2024, prior to the second payment occurring in March 2024. The second year of funding would then be acquitted in Term 1, 2025.

Funding must be spent on the categories that are identified in the application. A small variation in allocation of funding, e.g., less than 10% change from the application is acceptable. Any variation greater than this requires approval from the OSHC Establishment Grants team and may require additional acquittal or justification.

For instance, if it was proposed to spend $5,000 on resources, but when establishing the service, you identify that you need to spend $12,000, you would be required to a) send an email to the grants team to receive approval, and b) if the service has already commenced, provide justification in the acquittal form. If you needed to spend $5,500, then this would be within 10% and no approval would be required.

A reporting template which should be used to guide the capture of information relating to both output and outcomes will be provided to successful schools.

**How do I arrange payments to a third-party provider?**

All grant funding will be distributed to lead schools, and it is the responsibility of the recipient school to transfer funding to the service’s provider.

A detailed accounting of the financial arrangement must be included in the Licence Agreement. A [customised version of the Department’s recommended Licence Agreement](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/website/PAL/oshc-decision-making-licence-agreement-template.docx) template with an additional section (Schedule 5) is to be used by successful schools. This customised version should not be used by schools who are not receiving grants as part of this program.

It is expected that providers will keep receipts, payslips etc that relate to any claims that they are making to the school for reimbursement. The provider should invoice the school for agreed costs incurred and provide evidence of this expenditure along with the invoice in arrears.

As part of the yearly acquittals process, the school is responsible for acquitting both its and the provider’s expenditure.

## Establishing a service

**What information is available for schools intending to operate the service through their school council?**

The Department has published guidance for schools on the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL). A direct link to the advice on PAL can be found [here](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/outside-school-hours-care-decision-making-regarding-provision-oshc/policy).

Successful schools will also be supported by the OSHC Establishment Grants team with written guidance, template documents, post-approval briefings and access to staff in regional offices who can support service establishment and delivery. These documents will be available in [a separate section of the Resources tab on the PAL advice for OSHC](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/outside-school-hours-care-decision-making-regarding-provision-oshc/resources).

**What should a school consider when deciding whether to engage a third-party provider or operate through school council?**

The school should consider the following:

* The school size and the number of likely enrolments. Very small schools will likely find it harder to engage a third-party provider.
* The ability of the school council to fulfil responsibilities such as hiring staff, monitoring service operation, and meeting regulatory requirements, budget and finance, and general service governance.
* The ability of the school council to successfully apply and administer Child Care Subsidy.
* Whether any providers can meet any specific service needs that the school population might have, or if providers’ philosophy or policies are compatible with the school’s expectations

**Should our service charge a parent fee?**

Yes. For the service to be eligible for Child Care Subsidy (CCS), the service must charge a parent fee. For a school council delivered service, the school council will determine the fee structure. Where the service is to be delivered by a third-party provider, they will determine the fee structure. Without charging a fee, the service would not become financially viable at the end of the funding arrangement.

**Can Year 7 or Year 8 students also attend the program?**

Regulated children’s services are considered to provide care for children up to the age of 13 years old. However, there may be reasons your service needed to support young people above that age, for example including older students with complex disabilities. Child Care Subsidy is not generally payable for children older than this, although there are possible exemptions in some circumstances, so parents/carers may be unable to claim the subsidy and therefore afford the service. Questions about these exemptions should be sent to DESE at [ccs.assessment@dese.gov.au](mailto:ccs.assessment@dese.gov.au).

**Do I have to go through the Expression of Interest (EOI) process to engage a third-party provider?**

Yes. You must undertake a thorough and transparent process to appoint a provider and have this decision ratified by your school council. The Department has published guidance for engaging a provider on PAL, which can be found [here](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/outside-school-hours-care-decision-making-regarding-provision-oshc/guidance/plan-start-service-0).

You need to complete a transparent EOI process even if the OSHC will be established off-site, as the establishment will be making use of grant funding, also requiring a transparent process.

**How can I find an existing provider in my area, or a service close to my school?**

Approved OSHC services, and their providers, can be searched on the National Register which is located on ACECQA’s website: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/national-registers>

However, for more targeted searches, there are government-created and third-party websites which may be more user friendly, such as:

* Child Care Finder: <https://www.childcarefinder.gov.au/>
* Starting Blocks: <https://www.startingblocks.gov.au/>

You can also email [oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au) for assistance with connecting with providers operating in your area, or who may be willing to expand operations into your area.

After identifying potential providers, you may contact [schools.procurement@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:schools.procurement@education.vic.gov.au) for advice on the procurement process. You may also wish to contact other schools that have a third-party provider delivering OSHC at their school to seek their feedback.

**What approvals will I need to deliver OSHC through my school council, and who from?**

If the school council intends to operate the service, the school council will need to apply for provider approval under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act*. If you are outsourcing to an external provider, they will likely already hold this approval. Whoever is operating the service will need to apply for service approval.

These applications are submitted to Quality Assessment and Regulation Division, as the state Regulatory Authority, through the NQA ITS portal: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/national-quality-agenda-it-system>.

Fees are payable for these applications, and yearly for approved services. These can be claimed as expenses as part of a grant application. A list of fees can be found here: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/applications/indexation-of-fees>.

The service will also require approval to administer Child Care Subsidy (CCS). This subsidy is administered by the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE). An OSHC service is eligible for CCS if it operates within seven separate weeks per calendar year. If the service is delivered by the school’s council, then the school must apply for this approval.

Information on applying for this subsidy can be found here: <https://www.dese.gov.au/child-care-package/child-care-subsidy/applying-child-care-subsidy-approval>.

**Does the service have to offer before school, after school and vacation care?**

A service may operate any combination of hours and days per week to meet local needs. For instance, if the local need is only for after school care, or for 3 days per week, it is acceptable to operate a service which only operates during these hours. The only requirement is that the service operate for seven separate weeks per year to enable eligibility for CCS.

**Is it acceptable to change the way the service operates after the funding is approved?**

Yes. You can make changes to the operation of the service. Changes that you may wish to make could include:

* Changing the days of the week, length of care provided, or sessions (before school, after school, vacation care) offered from what was proposed.
* Transferring the service from one third party provider to another, or from a third party to a school council, or vice versa.
* Moving the service to a different part of your school grounds if it is more suitable.
* Entering a cluster arrangement with other schools after funding is approved, if the costs can be met with the funding awarded. Contact [oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:oshc.central@education.vic.gov.au) if you would like to do this.

In some cases, changes to the service may need to be notified to Quality Assessment and Regulation Division (QARD), using the NQA ITS portal. If you are unsure whether this is required, email QARD at [licensed.childrens.services@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:licensed.childrens.services@education.vic.gov.au) or call 1300 307 415.

**What do I need to know about staffing a service at my school?**

If the service is delivered by your school council, you and your council will have the responsibility of hiring qualified staff. If you outsource to a third-party provider, that provider has this responsibility.

The service are required to have one educator present for every 15 children in attendance, or part thereof. One half the required educators needs to hold or be working towards a Diploma or equivalent qualification, with the remainder required to hold or be working towards at least a Certificate III or equivalent qualification. A complete list of these equivalent qualifications is published by [ACECQA](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/qualifications/requirements/working-in-OSHC-services), and includes several vocational and university qualifications.

If your school is in regional Victoria, there may be fewer qualified staff available. It is worth planning and consulting members of your local community to find out if anyone has the required qualifications or is willing to obtain them. The Government’s [Free TAFE](https://www.vic.gov.au/free-tafe) initiative includes several courses that are suitable for OSHC educators:

* Diploma or equivalent qualifications:
  + [Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care](https://www.skills.vic.gov.au/s/coursedetails?type=course&keyword=Diploma+of+Early+Childhood+Education+and+Care&id=CHC50113&ft=1) (recommended)
  + [Diploma of Community Services](https://www.skills.vic.gov.au/s/coursedetails?type=course&keyword=Diploma+of+Community+Services&id=CHC52015&ft=1)
* Certificate III or equivalent qualifications:
  + [Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care](https://www.skills.vic.gov.au/s/coursedetails?type=course&keyword=Certificate+III+in+Early+Childhood+Education+and+Care&id=CHC30113&ft=1)
  + [Certificate IV in Community Services](https://www.skills.vic.gov.au/s/coursedetails?type=course&keyword=Certificate+IV+in+Community+Services&id=CHC42015&ft=1)
  + [Certificate IV in Youth Work](https://www.skills.vic.gov.au/s/coursedetails?type=course&keyword=Certificate+IV+in+Youth+Work&id=CHC40413&ft=1)
  + [Certificate III](https://www.skills.vic.gov.au/s/coursedetails?type=course&keyword=Certificate+III+in+Education+Support&id=CHC30213&ft=1) or [Certificate IV in Education Support](https://www.skills.vic.gov.au/s/coursedetails?type=course&keyword=Certificate+IV+in+Education+Support&id=CHC40213&ft=1)

You may also be able to find local training providers who offer one of the ACECQA-approved qualifications by searching for the qualification code or name at <http://www.training.gov.au>.

You can find more information about the Free TAFE initiative at <http://www.vic.gov.au/freetafe/>.

## Providing transport

**What information do I need to apply for a transport-only solution?**

As well as providing information about the demand for OSHC, and the proposed budget, you will be asked where you intend to transport the children to. Provide as much detail as you can about the service, i.e., name, location. You will also need to provide evidence that you have discussed the arrangement with the service, which can be in the form of a letter or memorandum of understanding.