



# Victorian Principals Association

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## *VPA Forum Report*

### *Running a successful Out of School Hours Care Program with the new legislation*

#### Presenters:

- **Belinda Sims**, Manager Regulations Implementation, Service Development Division, Office for Children & Portfolio Coordination, DEECD
  - Changes to state regulations have resulted in problems for OSHC. The new National quality framework was introduced on January 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Staff now have to be qualified. It is difficult to source and retain qualified staff – transitional arrangements apply until 2014. 1 : 30 staff/student ratio. Pay rates are low and vary between centres - there is little consistency. Support needed from the Principal and School Council. Low numbers of applicants for vacancies as people do not want to work split shifts for low rates of pay.
  - All OSCH to be licensed by April 2011.
  - Two staff need to be on duty (some exemptions in small rural centres).
  - Staffing is difficult if a qualified person rings in sick.
  - Concern was expressed about the lack of consultation about these changes.
  - DEECD has provided little support, information or direction to principals involved.
  - Concern was expressed about the difficulty in funding quality programs with the current SRP funding. Many schools are forced to subsidise OSHC as a service to students and families as not all services operate on a “break-even” basis
  - Services need to be supported by DEECD to be more adequately and appropriately funded, especially given the new implementation of the National Quality Framework.
  
- **Barbara Romeril**, Executive Director, Community Child Care and Cat Kimber, Professional Support Consultant.
  - Keen to be involved in an ongoing dialogue with principals.
  - Stressed the need for direct funding of services for outcomes.
  - Principals and OSHC co-ordinators encouraged to contact Community Child Care with questions. [www.cccvic.org.au](http://www.cccvic.org.au) or 9486 3455
  - Professional Support Manual available
  - True costs need to be recognised and funded in the SRP as the financial cost to schools can be high.
  
- **Joanna Harrison**, Manager Child Care Benefit Program, Victoria State Office, Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations and Jackie Siu .
  - Principals encouraged to put in submissions using case studies to inform the government where the needs are and of the ongoing concerns that arise in different centres-rural and remote areas have a specific set of concerns, inner city and smaller schools also have concerns.
  - Can send out compliance teams to assist with streamlining practices and gain efficiencies.

- A well qualified, pro-active co-ordinator will provide an effective, quality service and reduce the principal's workload.
- Organise regular opportunities to provide a forum to discuss this issue.
- Financial assistance is available to set up new programs.
- Assistance (formula based) is available to sustain existing programs and ensure they are viable – contact Jackie- [www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au) .
- Dealing with three levels of government has proved very difficult for principals. Request a 'road map' of contacts and/or a Principal Starter Kit.
- Consider attaching information/discussion sessions to regional/network meetings.

**Suggested outcomes:**

- More forums attached to regional or network meetings re OSHC
- Improved funding model
- Acronym list from DEEWR
- List of schools with OSHC programs for networking