

5. OSCAR IN ST ALBANS (BEFORE SCHOOL PROGRAMME)

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Corporate Plan Output: Holiday Programmes	

The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of a pilot project in St Albans and to seek funding assistance for this project.

OSCAR IN ST ALBANS

The After-School Programme based at St Albans School began in 1986 and was the first such programme in the country, including having given the name "Out of School Care and Recreation" (OSCAR) to the movement.

Since 1986 the St Albans programme has continued to develop and is now firmly entrenched in the St Albans community and is one of the largest programmes in the city.

BEFORE SCHOOL PROGRAMME

The Management Committee for the OSCAR programme have been fielding calls for a programme to operate before school hours. The need for this programme has been expressed through three channels:

1. Comments from parents, either directly through day-to-day contact or via an Annual Survey that the programme runs.
2. The School Principal has expressed a concern over the number of children "hanging-out" on school grounds well before the opening of school hours.
3. A questionnaire late in 2001 suggested that a before-school programme could be trialled.

Consequently, a before-school (7.00 am – 8.30 am) programme was offered at the beginning of term one this year. Staff are in attendance from 6.45 am until 8.45 am.

Presently, 11 families are enrolled with the programme (one family has two children enrolled), with an average of four children attending daily.

OSCAR staff have found that the provision of this programme has enabled parents a greater option, with some parents choosing to enrol their child in the morning programme and picking them up immediately after school rather than enrol them in the afternoon programme. It is assumed that this allows the parent more quality time with their child.

FUNDING

As this is a pilot programme the programme is currently running at a deficit of approximately \$150.00 per week. Expenses are approximately \$300.00 and income \$100.00 per week.

Parents pay a fee of \$5.00 per child, per morning session. The Schools Board of Trustees has allocated \$1,000 towards assisting this pilot get up and running and this is being used to partially offset the deficit. Wages are a major cost of the programme.

OSCAR in St Albans is well managed and financially sound with an excellent track record in this area. They have had only minimal financial assistance over the years from the Community Board, mainly in the form of assistance for families on Community Service Card for holiday programmes.

CONCLUSION

This is a pilot programme and as such will need some financial assistance during its formative period. OSCAR in St Albans has proven to be well managed and able to progress to a sustainable state.

Recommendation: That an allocation of \$1,500 (ie deficit costs for one term) be granted to OSCAR in St Albans, from SCAP funds, for the purposes of supporting the pilot Before-School Programme.

Chairperson's Recommendation: That the officer's recommendation be adopted and that the funding be a one-off.