

Providing a Child Safe Environment

POLICY STATEMENT:

Our Service provides an environment that ensures the safety, health and wellbeing of children at all times. The welfare and protection of all children is of paramount importance. Educators will maintain the premises and equipment, adhere to procedures regarding safe practices and operate in line with legislative requirements relating to child protective practices and the Education and Care Services National Regulations and Law. Educators and management are aware of their legal responsibility as Mandatory Reporters to take action to protect and support children they suspect may be at significant risk of harm. Educators will ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times and that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury or trauma.

PROCEDURES:

a. Managing the Facility

1. Security:

- Only approved educators and management members will be given a key to access the building and equipment areas.
- A key register will be maintained that indicates the person's receipt of the key, date received, and date returned on completion of employment or completion of term as member of Management. If the service is situated on a school site, service will adhere to key registry requirements of the school.
- Extra keys will only be cut after agreement by the management and a record made of where they are and approved by the school.
- All monies and important documents will be kept in a lockable place and access will only be permitted by approved staff and management members.
- Educators will ensure that the building is left in a secure manner before leaving and all windows, cupboards, safe, and other relevant areas are locked. All heating and lighting is off and all doors properly secured.
- Educators will inform security and or the police, the committee and school as soon as possible if there has been a break in to the service of any kind.
- Educators will remain at the service until such persons arrive or inform them of what to do.

2. Buildings, Equipment and Maintenance:

- Equipment will be chosen to meet the children's developmental needs and interests. There will be sufficient access to furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment suitable for the education and care for each child.
- Service premises and all equipment and furniture will be maintained in a safe, clean condition and in good repair at all times. This will be achieved by the completion of daily safety checks.
- Children will be provided with adequate, developmentally and age-appropriate toilet, washing and drying facilities. These will enable safe use and convenient access by children.
- There must be no damaged plugs, sockets, power cords or extension cords.
- All plug sockets shall be maintained as child safe.
- Electrical appliances shall be in good working order.
- Electrical circuit breakers will be installed and be maintained.

- Provision will be made in the budget for regular maintenance and repair work and for deferred costs of major capital repairs.
- Management or school will develop a list of fully licensed and insured trades persons, which is made available to educators. This list will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- All contractors should have their own public liability insurance.
- The service and equipment will be regularly checked to ensure that they are in a good and safe condition, comply with relevant Australian Standards and have appropriate soft-fall surfacing maintained.
- Equipment will be regularly washed and cleaned.
- Recycled craft materials should be checked for potential hazards.
- Educators should ensure safe handling of all tools if used as part of any activity.
- Families will be encouraged to notify educators of any safety issues they observe.
- Anything that requires maintenance is to be reported to the Nominated Supervisor as soon as possible.
- Faulty equipment should be removed or protection placed around any dangerous building sites.
- A maintenance book / written reports will be kept that records any maintenance that needs to be addressed.
- The maintenance book will record;
 - Type of problem
 - Date that it was observed
 - Who notified the Nominated Supervisor and when?
 - What was done to rectify the problem?
 - Date repaired
 - Tradesperson employed to repair the problem
- For urgent repairs the Nominated Supervisor will organise a contractor to attend to the problem. The contractor will be chosen from a list that has been previously approved by the committee or school.
- Non-urgent repairs will be recorded in the maintenance book. The Nominated Supervisor will note this in their report and bring it to the attention of the school or management at the next meeting. Management and the Nominated Supervisor will organise to rectify the problem.
- For major repairs a minimum of three quotes will be sought where necessary and reviewed by management who will make a decision on a further course of action. The Nominated Supervisor or someone with management control may obtain the quotes.
- Maintenance reviews should be done as part of the Nominated Supervisor's report at each meeting.
- The Nominated Supervisor will also give a review of works completed by any tradesman employed, for future reference.
- It is the responsibility of management, once a problem has been raised, to ensure that it is rectified in the most efficient manner and that the service is safe for educators and clientele.
- Should the service be considered unsafe or as being a health risk, then the service will be closed, after notice has been given to all relevant parties, until the problem has been rectified.
- The service will have an appropriate number of first aid kits that are suitable to the ages and needs of the children attending. The first aid kit will be well stocked and be easily recognised and accessible at all times.

3. Storage:

- A storage system should be devised that ensures easy access and un-cluttered storage of all equipment.
- Storage areas will be cleaned and tidied at least twice a year or when seen as necessary.

- Play equipment and toys should be easily accessible to all children during the operating hours of the centre.
- Children will show respect for the equipment and be expected to pack equipment away that they have used to avoid trip hazards.
- All equipment is to be neatly packed away at the end of each session.
- Craft equipment will be stored in a separate area, children should ask permission before removing any craft equipment, such as paints and glues etc. which has not been set up by the staff.
- All craft equipment is to be properly washed and cleaned before storage.
- Where room permits, a separate storage area will be available for sporting and large outdoor equipment to prevent clutter.
- All items such as cleaning materials, disinfectants, flammable, poisonous and other dangerous substances, tools, toiletries, first aid equipment, and medications should be stored in the designated secured area which is inaccessible to the children. Educators are responsible to ensure that these areas remain secure and that they do not inadvertently provide access to these items.
- Kitchen and other refuse areas will be provided with lidded facilities that are cleaned and emptied daily.
- Educators and management will ensure that all family records are kept in a nominated secure place, ensuring that records are kept confidential and not left accessible to others during the course of the daily operations.

4. Ventilation, temperature and natural light:

- All heating and cooling systems will be of good quality and checked regularly to ensure safety and reliability.
- All heating and cooling systems and power cords will be kept in a safe area and away from children.
- Educators will take individual needs and specific activities into account when ensuring that heating, ventilation levels are comfortable.
- Should educators, children or families complain about the temperature in the service not being at a comfortable level, this matter will be drawn to the attention of management and steps will be made to address the problem.
- Adequate ventilation will be provided at all times. Windows will be properly maintained to ensure easy opening and protection from bugs and insects.
- Where activities involve toxic materials such as paints and glues, staff are to ensure there is adequate ventilation before undertaking the activity.
- Windows are to be opened during operation of the service unless closed to protect from extreme weather conditions.
- Natural light is considered to be most desirable. Provision of natural light areas will be enhanced as much as possible.
- In areas made available for children's homework or other fine detail, natural light will be made available where possible and good overhead lighting provided.
- Adequate light will be maintained both indoors and outdoors. A security light will be placed at the entrance to the service that clearly provides unobstructed view of the door and surrounding areas.
- Outdoor lighting will be suitable so that families, staff and children can enter and exit the building without any unsafe dark areas.

5. Pest Control:

- Equipment and especially food items will be properly stored so as not to attract pests and vermin.
- Refuse bins and disposal areas will be emptied and cleaned daily.
- Kitchen, food preparation areas and storage will be cleaned and maintained daily.
- All areas will be checked daily for any signs of pests or vermin.

- Should any pests or vermin be identified then action should be taken to rid the service of the problem by:
 - Initially using non-chemical methods such as physical removal, maintaining a clean environment, and use of any non-chemical products.
 - Low irritant, environmentally friendly sprays to be used minimally and only with adequate ventilation and preferably not in the presence of the children.
 - Other methods such as the employment of a pest control company if deemed necessary by management where the above methods have failed.
 - If urgent, the Nominated Supervisor may obtain a contractor from management or school list to address the problem.
 - If non urgent, the Nominated Supervisor will bring the problem to the attention of management in their report and management will decide on the appropriate course of action.
 - All families will be notified of any use of chemicals.
 - Any use of chemical products should only be conducted outside the hours of the children and educators' presence in the building.
 - All action will be taken to remove the children, educators, families and visitors from the environment for as long as is safe and viable.

b. Managing the indoor and Outdoor Environment:

1. Indoor Environment:

- The services indoor environment will be smoke free and no smoking notices will be prominently displayed.
- The Nominated Supervisor will only enrol the number of children in the service, which can comfortably fit into the building space and in accordance with the National Regulations.
- Where children are indoors for long periods due to weather conditions, special activities will be planned and other areas sought to disperse the group such as school halls and verandas.
- Separate areas in the indoor environment will be provided for where possible including :
 - Signing children in / out of the centre.
 - Collection of fees, answering phones, and maintaining daily records.
 - Educators and families to talk in confidence.
 - Children to store their bags and belongings.
 - Storage of equipment, food, dangerous materials, and family records.
 - Preparation of food and drinks.
 - Kitchen and other refuse.
 - Cleaning of equipment.
 - Male and female toilet, hand basins and hand drying facilities.
 - Creative and other activities.
 - Large and small group activities.
 - Display of children's activities and work.
 - Quiet space for children to retreat to, or do homework or lie down if unwell
- The indoor area is to be set up to allow children to participate in a variety of activities with easy access to equipment. Drawing paper and other materials will be made available to the children at all times.
- Easy access to areas should be maintained by making clear easily definable passageways and walkways though the building.
- Staff will ensure that children properly store their bags and that bags and other items are not thrown into walkways or play areas.
- All items obstructing areas are to be removed and placed in the correct storage areas.
- Areas must be set up to ensure that proper supervision can be maintained at all times.
- Access to the outdoor environment should be clear and easily accessible by the children and staff.

2. Outdoor Environment:

- The outdoor environment provides each child with at least 7 square metres of unencumbered outdoor space in compliance with National Regulation 108.
- The outdoor environment will be smoke free and where possible, no smoking notices will be prominently displayed.
- The outdoor space will be inspected daily for any obstacles or dangerous items and the hazard check will be recorded if necessary of any hazards.
- Any hazardous items will be disposed of in a safe and careful manner prior to the children playing in the area.
- The outdoor space will be set up in a variety of ways to encourage participation.
- Areas will be made available where children can play in large or small groups or by themselves.
- Supervision should be properly maintained. Children are only to play in areas that are clearly visible to educators, and where child/educator ratios are maintained.
- Clear boundaries shall be set and enforced.
- When it is necessary to go outside the boundaries or line of supervision, an educator must accompany children.
- Adequate shade via trees and coverings will be maintained.
- As far as possible, activities will be set up in shaded areas.
- Use of other outdoor venues will be considered where access to the area is safe, adequate supervision can be maintained, the area is considered of value to the children's physical development and personal comfort, and where adequate staff/educator ratios can be maintained.

c. Prohibited Use of Tobacco, Illicit Drugs and Alcohol

Our service is strictly tobacco, illicit drug and alcohol free.

In order to keep children, educators, families and visitors free from the dangers of drugs, alcohol, tobacco smoke and other smoke, including illegal substances, the following rules apply:

1. The consumption of tobacco, drugs and alcohol is prohibited in all areas of the service including:
 - a) Inside.
 - b) Outside in the playground.
 - c) Outside in the car-park.
2. Smoking and the consumption of alcohol is also prohibited:
 - a) On incursions or excursions at any point during the event.
 - b) While travelling with a child.
 - c) At educator meetings.
 - d) At parent meetings.
 - e) At any social activity, whether in work hours or not, where the children and educators are involved.

* Under no circumstances will any person attend the service if they are affected by alcohol or drugs, including prescription medication, if in any way the consumption of these items impairs an individual's capacity to supervise, educate or care for children.

* The service will have No Smoking signs displayed.

* With respect to employees of the Belair Community OOSH, breaching the Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy may result in the implementation of disciplinary procedures.

d. Child Protective Practices

1. Mandatory Reporting:

- A Mandatory Reporter is anybody who delivers services to children as part of their paid or professional work.
- In OSHC services mandatory reporters are:
 - o Educators that deliver services to children
 - o Management, either paid or voluntary, whose duties include direct responsibility or direct supervision for the provision of these service

 - o Educators are mandated to report to Community Services if they have current concerns about the safety or welfare of a child relating to section 23 of the NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998.

See the Child Protection policy for more information

CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations	Quality Standards & Elements	Links to other Service Policies	Other Documentation/ Evidence
<p>S162, 165, 166, 167, 169, 170, 171, 174</p> <p>R77, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 89, 97, 98, 99, 100, 103, 105, 107, 108, 109, 110, 114, 115, 168, 170, 175, 176.</p>	<p>Standards 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5 7.1</p> <p>Elements 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 4.1.1, 7.1.2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety policies and procedures • Staffing policies and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Children and Young Person's (Care and Protection) Act 1998 • Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 • Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 • Ombudsman Act 1974 (with relevant Child Protection Amendments) • NSW Department of Community Services Mandatory Reporting Guidelines • NSW Child Protection Interagency Guidelines (2006) • Legislation Amendment (Wood Inquiry Recommendations) Act 2009 No 13 • Keep Them Safe – Information session/ overview participants manual 2009/ 2010 • My Time, Our Place. • Parent handbook • Staff handbook • Risk Assessments • Safety Checks • No Smoking Signs

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

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