



Supervision of Children

POLICY STATEMENT:

Lake Mac Newy OOSH believes that the supervision of children in our care is of paramount importance and that we all have a responsibility to protect the health and safety of each individual at all times. All educators, staff members, volunteers and visitors share responsibility for maintaining active supervision and promoting a child-safe culture. Children need safe and secure environments in which to thrive. Effective supervision is integral to creating environments that are safe and responsive to the needs of all children. Part of this is ensuring that children are protected from hazards or harm that may arise from their play and daily routines. Effective supervision also allows educators to engage in meaningful interactions with children.

Our service is committed to:

- Complying with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations at all times.
- Ensuring that children are supervised at all times;
- Considering the design and arrangement of children's environments to support active supervision;
- Using supervision skills to reduce or prevent injury or incident to children and adults;
- Guiding educators to make decisions about when children's play needs to be interrupted and redirected;
- Supporting educators and their supervision strategies;
- Providing consistent supervision strategies when there are staffing changes; and
- Acknowledging and understanding when supervision is required for high-risk experiences and/or the ratio of adults to children is increased.

Our service is committed to ensuring that children's safety, welfare, wellbeing, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration in all supervision decisions, practices and actions.

Where there is any conflict between the interests of a child and the interests of adults, operational convenience, staffing pressures, programming, cost, reputation or the service, the child's safety, welfare and wellbeing will take priority.

Supervision practices will support the prevention of harm, abuse, neglect, grooming, unsafe conduct and child-on-child harm.

(National Quality Standard 2.2, Element 2.2.1)

PROCEDURES:

a) Planning for Supervision

- **Ratios:**
 - ✓ In accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, the service will ensure that the prescribed ratio of 1 educator for every 15 children is adhered to at all times the service is educating and caring for children. Adequate numbers of educators must be rostered for excursions to effectively supervise the children. The number of educators must take into consideration the ages and developmental stages of the children attending the excursion and be based on a risk assessment of the excursion.



- **Child-safe supervision practices:**

Children must not be left alone with visitors, students or volunteers. Visitors, students and volunteers must be supervised by an educator at all times while at the service.

The service will identify and actively monitor higher-risk supervision areas and situations, including bathrooms, hidden or low-visibility areas, transitions, transport, excursions, outdoor environments and situations where children may become isolated from the group.

Educators are expected to maintain professional boundaries and position themselves in ways that maximise visibility and accountability while respecting children's dignity and privacy.

- **Supervision Zoning:**

- ✓ Zoning areas of the service helps educators to better supervise children when they are accessing various locations such as indoor, outdoor, sporting fields, toilets etc. The service will ensure a zoned map is on display that shows educators the area they are primarily responsible for supervising. A marker within each zone on the map will demonstrate the most effective vantage point for effective supervision. This will be a location that allows for the educator to see and/or hear the children accessing that zone and acts as a guide only. Educators will move throughout the zone freely and not remain fixed unless the level of supervision required them to be.
- ✓ All educators will be involved in the preparation of the zone map and will physically walk the areas to determine where the most effective zones and vantage points are located.
- ✓ Each zone will have different duties required of the educators supervising them. The service will ensure each zone has a documented list of the expected duties required in each zone. When creating these duty lists, the Coordinator will take into account the number of children who may access that zone, the activities that will be happening, possible risk factors and hazards and visibility. A strategy for children accessing toilet facilities will be included in the services zoning plans and duty list.

- **Rosters:**

- ✓ To ensure there are a sufficient number of educators to meet ratios each time children are being educated and cared for, the service will ensure a roster is completed and made available for educators to review. When creating a roster, the Coordinator will take the number of expected children enrolled into consideration.
- ✓ As well as a shift roster, the service will also assign educators a zone in accordance with the zone map described above. Educators will rotate their assigned zones each shift so that they are familiar with the supervision requirements in each zone and also to build relationships with all of the children as they move around the service.
- ✓ Educators under 18 years of age must be adequately supervised by an educator over 18 years of age and must not be left alone with children.



- **Team Approach:**

- ✓ Each educator comes to the service with their own beliefs and values. With this also comes their understanding and interpretation of how and why certain things are done. It is important to ensure that the service has a team approach when it comes to the way supervision is performed and why it is so critical to their work. The service will regularly discuss supervision practices at meetings and explore each educators definition of what supervision means to them and what that looks like in action. For all children to be safely supervised there must be an agreement on how supervision is undertaken.

Child-safe supervision

- ✓ Educators will actively supervise children in ways that promote visibility, accountability and child safety while respecting children's dignity and privacy.
- ✓ The service will identify and monitor higher-risk areas including bathrooms, hidden or low-visibility spaces, transitions, transport situations and outdoor environments.
- ✓ Educators will avoid situations where they are isolated with a child where possible and will maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- ✓ Supervision strategies will consider risks relating to unsafe adult conduct, grooming behaviours, child-on-child harm and children becoming isolated from the group.

Escalation of supervision concerns

Any educator who identifies unsafe supervision practices, inadequate supervision arrangements, repeated supervision failures, breaches of professional conduct, or concerns about child safety must immediately take action to protect children and report the concern to the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person.

Educators are expected to actively communicate and support one another to maintain effective supervision at all times. Where an educator observes a potential supervision risk, distraction, unsafe practice or gap in supervision, they are expected to immediately address the concern respectfully with the educator involved and, where required, communicate the concern via agreed supervision systems such as verbal communication, walkie-talkies or direct educator handover to ensure children remain actively supervised.

Following any supervision-related incident, including a missing or unaccounted-for child, an inadequate supervision concern, an unsafe practice, the misuse of digital technology, or a child safety concern, the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person will review supervision arrangements and identify any changes required to reduce future risk.

Concerns relating to child protection, reportable conduct, mandatory reporting obligations or serious incidents must be managed in accordance with the service's Child Safe Environment, Child Protection and Incident Management policies and relevant legal obligations.



b) Minimising Risk

• Risk Assessments:

- ✓ Each supervision zone of the service comes with its own unique risks and hazards. To minimise the possibility of children, educators or visitors being harmed anywhere in the service it may be necessary for certain zones to have a risk assessment completed and documented. This will assist educators in being able to focus on supervising and interacting with children rather than dealing with hazard reduction during key supervision times.
- ✓ The service will ensure that any area deemed 'high risk', based on the volume of children accessing it, the activities that happen in that zone or the number of 'near misses' that have occurred there, will have a designated risk assessment and accompanying management plan or strategy. This may be included as part of the service's daily indoor/outdoor safety check.

• Access:

- ✓ Educators will ensure that children are unable to/understand not to access unsupervised areas of the service and that potentially hazardous items are kept out of areas that children have access to in accordance with service safety procedures.

c) The Principles of Active Supervision

Active supervision is a combination of listening to and watching children play, being aware of the environment and its potential risks, any equipment children are using, the weather conditions, the time of day, managing small and large groups of children, transitions and many more factors. It is crucial that educators are aware of the different ages, personalities, behaviours, needs, abilities and characteristics of the children in their care. How children interact, communicate and play with one another is dependent on the educators building relationships with children to learn about who they are, how they react in certain situations and discover their interests. These are vital skills to develop as they assist educators to predict children's play patterns, which affects how educators plan and establish environments and coordinate supervision strategies to maximise children's safety and ability to play free from harm or injury.

***Knowledge:**

- ✓ Understanding each child's abilities and skill level by developing meaningful relationships with all children and engaging in their play.
- ✓ Using clear and simple rules and boundaries that are developed with and known to all children and consistently applied by educators, and enforcing strategies for when children do have to move out of play areas, such as buddy systems for toilet access, etc.



- ✓ Checking the environment for hazards and risks prior to children accessing it, and also during supervision, and ensuring the setting up of the environment supports active supervision practices.

***Vigilance:**

- ✓ Educators positioning themselves in strategic positions where they can see and hear children.
- ✓ Educators scanning constantly with both sight and hearing for any hazards or issues that may pose a risk to children's health, well-being or safety.
- ✓ Circulating the play areas where children are situated.
- ✓ Educators must remain actively engaged with children and avoid prolonged periods of sitting, social conversations or activities that reduce active supervision capacity
- ✓ Educators must not use personal mobile phones, smart watches, cameras, computers or other personal electronic devices while actively supervising children, unless required in an emergency or authorised by the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person.
- ✓ Service-issued devices may only be used for approved service purposes and must not compromise active supervision. Any use of digital technology with children must be age-appropriate, actively supervised and in line with the service's Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy.

*** Empowerment:**

- ✓ Teach children how to appropriately and safely use equipment and access play areas and take some responsibility for their actions.
- ✓ Support children to determine safe and unsafe practices.
- ✓ Encourage children's confidence in reminding their peers about safe practices and to alert an educator if there is a problem.

d) Supervision Outside of the Service

• **Transporting children to and from the service:**

- ✓ There are obvious hazards that can be identified when children are outside of the service environment. Such times may include excursions, when children are collected and dropped off at school and when moving between the service and extra-curricular activities. Educators will discuss and document the potential hazards and risks associated with the transportation of children whether it be via walking, buses or other modes. A documented risk assessment will be available if the activities of children during these transitions are deemed at high risk.
- ✓ Educators will ensure that children are supervised at all times whilst under the care of the service but outside of the service grounds and that any activities and play children undertake during these times is appropriate to the environment they are in and free from potential hazards where possible.
- ✓ Additional supervision strategies, including regular headcounts, roll calls and active educator positioning, will be implemented during transitions, high movement



periods and when children are moving between environments

- ✓ Educators will ensure they are familiar with the procedures for locating a missing child who has not arrived at their expected collection point.
- ✓ Educators will ensure that children using public bathroom facilities will be accompanied where possible and that headcounts and roll calls occur regularly.

e) Partnerships with Children

- ✓ Our service involves children in all aspects of the service's daily operations, including the rules and boundaries that guide their behaviour. Children are offered opportunities to develop their own rules and boundaries in partnership with educators, which then allows them to better understand the reason for limits and acknowledge the consequences when these are not adhered to.
- ✓ The age of children in our service range greatly, which reflects various levels of play behaviour. Educators will assess each play scenario in accordance with children's development and adapt supervision strategies to meet individual needs. For example, younger children may require more active supervision than older children do, or if children are doing an activity that poses a greater risk, that will affect the level and type of supervision given to that area.
- ✓ Educators respect all children's rights to privacy and allow them the space to be independent, but particularly children in older age groups. Educators will develop supervision strategies that monitor but also allow older children to self-manage their play and limit-setting.
- ✓ Educators supervision levels will add to and enrich the play of children and only disrupt activities if there is a need due to hazard and risk identification.
- ✓ Educators will engage in play with children and interact with them in accordance with our service values and beliefs, whilst also supervising. This helps build meaningful relationships and minimise challenging behaviours.



CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations	National Quality Standards & Elements	Links to other service policies	Other documentation/ evidence
Sections 2A, 3A, 5AA, 12, 51, 162B, 165, 166A, 167, 170, 171, 174 Regulations 82, 83, 84A, 84B, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102B, 102C, 102E, 102F, 115, 120, 122, 123, 151, 155, 168, 170, 171, 172, 176	Standard 2.2 Element 2.2.1, 2.2.2 Child Safe Standards 1, 5, 7, 8, 10	Excursion, Child Protection, Delivery and Collection of Children, Incident, Illness, Injury and Trauma, Interactions with Children, Providing a Child Safe Environment, Risk Assessment, Staffing and Water Policies.	- My Time, Our Place V2.0 - Service newsletters/ parent notices - Zone Maps and duty lists - Attendance /Rostering records - Safety checks - Risk assessments

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

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