

Policy Name:	Supervision of Children Policy
Date Created:	July 2011
Date Last Reviewed	June 2015 & 2018
Created By:	The Committee of Management and Staff
Authorised By:	Committee of Management
Review Responsibility:	The Committee of Management and Staff
Review Date:	July 2021

Best Practice – Quality Area 2

Purpose

To ensure that children are appropriately supervised at all times during their care at a Sherbourne Preschool, including, during offsite excursions and activities.

Scope

The Sherbourne Preschool is committed to ensuring that all educators provides direct and active supervision of the children at all times to ensure their safety. Educators and facilities must meet the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2010 to ensure a safe and secure learning environment is provided at all times.

Application

Committee of Management, educators, students, volunteers, children and families in the Sherbourne Preschool.

Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy:

Adequate supervision: (In relation to this policy) **supervision** entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate Supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- number, age and abilities of children
- number and positioning of educators
- current activity of each child
- areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

Attendance Record: Kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering and collecting the child or of the person in charge or educator.

Duty of care: A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of the organisations and staff to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury. In the context this policy, duty of care refers to the responsibility of education and care and their educators to provide children with adequate level of care and protection against foreseeable harm and injury.

Policy statement

- All children will be directly and actively supervised at all times.
- Staff will position themselves in a way to ensure maximum supervision of the room/outdoor area at all times.
- Staff will communicate with each other regularly regarding their movements, particularly relating to positioning and ability to provide active and direct supervision.
- All gates have self-closing mechanisms.

Our responsibilities

Sherbourne Preschool is responsible for:

- Ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the service are adequately supervised at all times they are in the care of that service A regular head count is taken of the children to ensure that each child is accounted for.
- Undertaking regular head counts which are referenced with the sign in/out book.
- Maintaining staff child ratios in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2010 at all times.
- Considering the design and arrangement of the service environment to support active supervision.
- Identifying high-risk activities, including excursions, through risk management process, and implementing strategies to improve children's safety e.g. increasing adult-to-child ratios above regulatory requirements.
- Ensuring supervision standards are maintained during educator breaks, including lunch breaks.
- Providing safe places for children, which allows adequate supervision and which include safe fall zones, good traffic flow, maintenance of buildings and equipment, and minimising trip hazards.
- Ensuring centre gates and entrance doorways are closed at all times to prevent children from leaving the centre unaccompanied. Within 30 minutes, the playground gate is to be padlocked.
- Ensuring parents/guardians sign their children in and out of the centre.
- Conducting daily safety checks of the environment to assess safety and remove hazards.
- Providing direct and constant supervision when a child is near water (refer to water policy).
- Conducting a risk assessment prior to an excursion to identify risks to health, safety and wellbeing and specifying how these risks will be managed and minimised.

- Notify the Approved Provider and Person in charge of a serious incident occurring at the service or a complaint being made that the health, safety and wellbeing of a child has been compromised.
- Checking that the sign in/out has been signed and if this has not occurred the staff member will sign and indicate who collected the child in lieu of the parent.
- Before leaving the centre each room is checked for children and cross referenced with sign in/out book.

If a child leaves the centre unaccompanied, we will ensure that:

- The premises (indoors and outdoors) are checked to see if the child is still within the centre.
- A search of the immediate area fence perimeter, car park, surrounding streets, parks and properties is undertaken as soon as the child is noticed to be missing.
- Parents, team leader, Children's Services' and Department of Human Services are contacted immediately.
- Police are called – 000 and staff to follow police direction. Staff will prepare an accurate description of the child including photograph, age, clothing and any distinguishing features.
- Staff will ensure that other children in the centre remain safe and calm.
- Counselling is offered to children, staff and families as required.
- A report is sent to Department of Human Services within 24 hours.

Family responsibilities

Families have a responsibility to ensure:

- An authorised person signs their child into and out of the centre each day.
- Centre gates and entrance doorways are closed at all times to prevent children from leaving the centre unaccompanied.
- Supervising their own children before signing them into the program and after they have signed them out of the program.
- Supervising other children in their care, including, siblings, while attending or assisting at the service.
- Ensuring that educators are aware that their children have arrived at or departed from the service.
- Being aware of the movement of other children near gates and doors when entering and exiting the service.

Source

DHS Children's Services Practice Notes
 Legal Aspects of Child Care Victoria 2009
 National Quality Standard 2011
 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
 Early Years Learning Framework
 Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 165, 167, 169,

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 101, 168, 176

National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Standard 2.3: Each child is protected

Element 2.3.1: Children are adequately supervised at all times

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

ATTACHMENT 1

Authorisation procedures

These procedures are to be followed when a child is collected by an unauthorised person, including where a parent/guardian or authorised nominee telephones the service to notify that such a person will be collecting their child.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

request that the parent/guardian or authorised nominee email or fax the authorisation if it is possible to do so, detailing the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting the child

accept a verbal authorisation if it is not possible for the parent/guardian or authorised nominee to provide authorisation via email or fax, provided the following procedure is followed:

all details of the person collecting the child, including the name, address and telephone number of the person must be obtained

two educators take the verbal authorisation message (recommended by DEECD)

the verbal authorisation is documented and stored with the child's enrolment record for follow-up

photo identification is obtained to confirm the person's identity on arrival at the service

ensure that parents/guardians or authorised nominees follow up a verbal authorisation by completing an Authorisation Form (Attachment 2) when next at the service, or by adding details of the new authorised nominee to the child's enrolment form

ensure that fax or email authorisation is stored with the child's enrolment record

ensure the attendance record is completed prior to child leaving the service

refuse to release a child where authorisation is not/cannot be provided by the parent/guardian or authorised nominee

contact police if the safety of the child or service staff is threatened

implement late collection procedures (refer to Attachment 4) if required

notify the Approved Provider in the event that written authorisation is not provided for further follow-up.

ATTACHMENT 2

Authorisation Form

Authorisation form

To be used as a follow-up to a verbal/email/fax authorisation when the parent/guardian or authorised nominee is next at the service

I _____ authorised by telephone/email/fax (please circle)

for my child/ren (write name/s) _____ to be

collected from [Service Name] on [Date] by:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

This was a one-off occasion and this person is **not** to be included on my child's enrolment form as an authorised nominee to collect my child on an ongoing basis.

Signed: _____ (Parent/guardian or authorised nominee)

Date: _____

This form will be attached to the child's enrolment form.

ATTACHMENT 3

Procedures to ensure the safe collection of children

Early childhood professionals have a duty of care not to endanger children at the service by knowingly placing them in a situation that could reasonably be expected to be dangerous, including releasing a child into the care of an inappropriate person (refer to *Definitions*).

Where an educator believes that the parents/guardians or authorised nominee may be ill, affected by alcohol or drugs, or not able to safely care for the child, the following procedures must be followed.

Consult with the Nominated Supervisor or the Approved Provider, if possible.

Advise the person collecting the child of their concerns and suggest contacting an alternative authorised nominee to collect the child.

If the Nominated Supervisor or the Approved Provider fears for the safety of the child, themselves or other service staff at any time, contact the police immediately.

Complete the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* and file with the child's enrolment form.

Inform the Approved Provider as soon as is practicable, and at least within 24 hours of the incident.

Inform the Regulatory Authority (DEECD) within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring (refer to *Definitions*).

ATTACHMENT 4

Procedures for the late collection of children

Scenario 1: The service has been notified of the late collection

Where a parent/guardian or authorised nominee **has** notified the service that they will be late collecting their child, the Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

ensuring that the educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times children are in attendance at the service

contacting parents/guardians or the authorised nominee if the child has not been collected by the agreed time, and informing the Approved Provider of the situation

following the steps listed in scenario 3 (below) if parents/guardians or the authorised nominee do not arrive to collect the child and cannot be contacted.

Scenario 2: The service has *not* been notified of the late collection

Where a parent/guardian or authorised nominee is late collecting their child and **has not** notified the service that they will be late, the Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

ensuring that the educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times children are in attendance at the service

contacting parents/guardians or the authorised nominee to request collection

informing the Approved Provider of the situation

following the steps listed in scenario 3 (below) if the parents/guardians or authorised nominee cannot be contacted.

Scenario 3: The child has not been collected and a parent/guardian/authorised nominee is unable to be contacted

Where the parent/guardian or authorised nominee is late collecting their child and is **unable to be contacted**, the Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

ensuring that the educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times children are in attendance at the service

contacting Child FIRST or the local police if a child has not been collected within a set time period (to be determined by the service)

notifying DEECD as soon as is practicable

informing the Approved Provider of the situation.

Late collection fee

A late collection fee may be charged in accordance with the *Fees Policy* of the service in all of the above scenarios.