

CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

MANDATORY – QUALITY AREA 2

National Quality Standards

Regulation 168 National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety Standard 2

1. Purpose

This policy provides clear guidelines and procedures to ensure:

- all children attending Elizabeth Grove Children's Centre are participating in a safe environment
 - all reasonable steps are taken by the approved provider, educators and staff to ensure health, safety and wellbeing of children attending Avenues College Children Centre.

2 . Policy Statement

Values

Elizabeth Grove Children's Centre has a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that all children are safe in their care, and will provide training, resources, information and guidance to support this. The centre is committed to:

- ensuring that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at Elizabeth Grove Children's Centre is protected at all times while also promoting their learning and development
- fulfilling its duty of care obligations under the law by protecting children from any reasonable, foreseeable risk of injury or harm. Educators will take all reasonable steps to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing at all times
- encouraging active participation from parents/guardians and families at Elizabeth Grove Children's Centre and ensuring that a partnership is based on honesty and support

Scope

This policy applies to the Elizabeth Grove Children's Centre Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of the centre including during offsite excursions and activities.

The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that a parent of a child being educated and cared for by the service is notified as soon as practicable, but not later than 24 hours after the occurrence, if the child is involved in any incident, injury, trauma or illness while the child is being educated and cared for by the education and care service.

Children leaving the education and care service premises

The nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that a child who is being educated and cared for by the education and care service leaves the education and care service premises with ... as specified during enrolment processes - authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record or is taken on an excursion in accordance with this Division; or is given into the care of a person or taken outside the premises: or as per emergency needs of a child and or centre (child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or treatment)

A regular risk assessment and visual spot checks must be conducted regularly and all risks promptly and adequately resolved to support the safety, health or wellbeing of any child in care.

5. DEFINITIONS

Code of conduct: A set of rules or practices that establish a standard of behaviour to be followed by individuals and organisations. A code of conduct defines how individuals should behave towards each other, and towards other organisations and individuals in the community (refer to Code of Conduct Policy).

Duty of care: In the context of this policy, duty of care refers to the responsibility of education and care services to provide children with an adequate level of care and protection against foreseeable harm and injury. Educators will provide safe and exciting and responsive environment as much as possible to further support child's wellbeing and develop skills.

Notifiable complaint: A complaint that alleges a breach of the Act or Regulation, or alleges that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child at the service may have been compromised. Any complaint of this nature must be reported by the Approved Provider or nominee as per Department guidelines.

Written notification of complaints must be submitted using the appropriate forms, which can be found on the ACECQA website: www.acecqa.gov.au

Serious incident: A children's service is required to notify the Department when a serious incident occurs at the service. A serious incident is defined as:

- the death of a child while being cared for or educated by the service
- any incident involving injury or trauma to a child while being cared for or educated by the service requiring the
 - attention of a registered medical practitioner; or
 - admission to a hospital
 - a child being cared for or educated by the service appears to be missing or otherwise unaccounted for or appears to have been taken or removed from the service contrary to the regulations
 - any incident requiring attendance by emergency services.

obtained once in a 12 month period.

Providing a child safe environment

A children's service must notify the relevant regional office by telephone within 24 hours of the incident, followed by written notification as soon as practicable.

7. PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ensuring children are adequately supervised and that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times
- ensuring that the Nominated Supervisor and staff members at the service who work with children are advised of current child protection legislation, its application, and any obligations that they may have under that law
- ensuring parents/guardians have completed the enrolment form including details of authorised nominees, and permission forms for excursions and administration of medication (refer to Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy, Delivery and Collection of Children Policy, Excursions and Service Events Policy, Administration of Medication Policy and Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy)
- ensuring the physical environment at the service is safe, secure and free from hazards for children

- conducting risk assessments for excursions and considering children's safety when leaving the service premises
- ensuring all equipment and materials used at the service meet relevant safety standards (refer to Service policies section of this policy)
- ensuring the service is up to date with current legislation on child restraints in vehicles if transporting children (refer to Occupational Health and Safety Policy, Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy)
- implementing and practising emergency and evacuation procedures (refer to Emergency and Evacuation Policy)
- ensuring there are appropriate procedures in place for the safe delivery and collection of children (refer to Delivery and Collection of Children Policy)
- ensuring that the Nominated Supervisor, educators and all staff at the service who work with children are aware that it is an offence to subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances
- notifying Department for Education, line manager and Education Director of a serious incident (refer to Definitions) occurring at the service as soon as possible and report to IRMS within 24 hours
- implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, contractors and parents/guardians
- identifying and providing appropriate resources and training to assist educators, staff, contractors, visitors, volunteers and students to implement this policy (refer to Sources)
- protecting the rights of children and families, and encouraging their participation in decision-making
- ensuring the Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, contractors, volunteers and students are kept informed of any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- ensuring that all educators and staff who work with children are aware of this policy, and are supported to implement it in the service
- protecting the rights of children and families, and encouraging their participation in decision-making at the service
- ensuring that all children are adequately supervised at all times (refer to Supervision of Children Policy and Interactions with Children Policy)
- ensuring they are aware of current child protection legislation, its application and any obligations that they have under the law
- ensuring learning environments are established that provide sufficient space, and include carefully chosen and well-maintained resources and equipment that will help enhance the quality of children's learning and experiences
- organising/facilitating regular safety audits of the following:
 - emergency equipment
 - playgrounds and fixed equipment in outdoor environments
 - cleaning services
 - horticultural maintenance
 - pest control
- ensuring that all cupboards/rooms are labelled accordingly, including those that contain chemicals and first aid kits, and that child-proof locks are installed on doors and cupboards where contents may be harmful
- ensuring that all contractors/visitors sign in to the visitor's log book
- ensuring the physical environment at the service is safe, secure and free from hazards for children
- conducting risk assessments for excursions and considering children's safety when leaving the service premises

- ensuring all equipment and materials used at the service meet relevant safety standards (refer to the Service policies section of this policy)
- ensuring the service is up to date with current legislation on child restraints in vehicles if transporting children (refer to Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy)
- implementing and practising emergency and evacuation procedures (refer to Emergency and Evacuation Policy)
- ensuring that educators, staff, parents/guardians follow procedures for the safe delivery and collection of children (refer to Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy, Delivery and Collection of Children Policy)
- ensuring that educators and staff comply with the service's Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy and encouraging parents/guardians to do so ensuring that all educators and staff at the service who work with children are aware that it is an offence to subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances
- implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, contractors and parents/guardians
- identifying and providing appropriate resources and training to assist educators, staff, contractors, visitors, volunteers and students to implement this policy (refer to Sources)
- informing the Approved Provider of any serious incident (refer to Definitions) at the service
- keeping up to date and complying with any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy.

Certified Supervisors and other educators/staff are responsible for:

- actively supervising children at all times (refer to Supervision of Children Policy and Interactions with Children Policy)
- undertaking appropriate training and education on child protection, including recognising the signs and symptoms of child abuse, knowing how to respond, and understanding responsibilities and processes for reporting and managing concerns/incidents (refer to Child Protection Policy)
- maintaining learning environments that provide sufficient space, and include carefully chosen and well-maintained resources and equipment to ensure a safe environment
- maintaining a regular cleaning schedule for all equipment to avoid cross-infection (refer to Hygiene Policy)
- maintaining a clean environment daily, and removing tripping/slipping hazards as soon as these become apparent (refer to Occupational Health and Safety Policy)
- conducting a daily check of the building, ensuring all children are signed out of the service, doors and windows are closed and locked, and appliances are switched off etc. A written record of the daily check should be kept, signed by an educator and filed for future reference
- educating and empowering children to talk about events and situations that make them feel uncomfortable
- ensuring the physical environment at the service is safe, secure and free from hazards for children
- conducting risk assessments for excursions and considering children's safety when leaving the service premises (refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy)
- ensuring all equipment and materials used at the service meet relevant safety standards
- complying with the service's Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy
- implementing and practising emergency and evacuation procedures (refer to Emergency and Evacuation Policy)
- following procedures for the safe delivery and collection of children (refer to Delivery and Collection of Children Policy)
- ensuring that children at the service are not subjected to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances

- notifying the Nominated Supervisor or the Approved Provider immediately on becoming aware of any concerns, complaints or allegations regarding the health, safety and welfare of a child
- informing the Approved Provider and parents of any serious incident (refer to Definitions) at the service
- implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, contractors and parents/guardians
- undertaking appropriate training and using relevant resources to implement this policy (refer to Sources)
- protecting the rights of children and families, and encouraging their participation in decision-making
- keeping up to date and complying with any changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading and complying with this policy
- reporting any concerns regarding child safety or wellbeing to the Nominated Supervisor
- abiding by the service's Code of Conduct
- familiarising themselves with the service's Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy.
- Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.
- EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness, particularly in relation to identifying and responding to child safety concerns
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

To be reviewed annually at end of year with annual review.