

Best Practice – Quality Area 2

PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines to ensure:

- the provision of a safe and secure environment for all children at Goulburn Region Preschool Assoc. Inc Services.
- adequate supervision of all enrolled children is maintained at all times.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

Goulburn Region Preschool Assoc. Inc is committed to:

- providing adequate supervision of all enrolled children in all aspects of the service's program
- ensuring all children are directly and actively supervised by educators employed or engaged by Goulburn Region Preschool Assoc. Inc
- maintaining a duty of care (refer to *Definitions*) to all children at Goulburn Region Preschool Assoc. Inc services.
- ensuring there is an understanding of the shared legal responsibility and accountability between, and a commitment by, all persons to implement the procedures and practices outlined in this policy.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisors, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Goulburn Region Preschool Assoc. Inc, including during offsite excursions and activities.

3. PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- complying with the legislated educator-to-child ratios at all times (*Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Sections 169(1), *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 123, 355, 357, 360)
- counting only those educators who are working directly with children at the service in the educator-to-child ratios (Regulation 122)
- ensuring a minimum of two educators are rostered on duty at all times children are in attendance at the service
- ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the service are adequately supervised (refer to *Definitions*) at all times they are in the care of that service (*Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 165(1))
- considering the design and arrangement of the service environment to support active supervision. This may be supported by a documented supervision plan (refer to Attachment

1 – Supervision Procedure and Attachment 2 – Developing a supervision plan at your service)

- identifying high-risk activities, including excursions (refer to *Excursions and Service Events Policy*), through a risk management process, and implementing strategies to improve children’s safety e.g. increasing adult-to-child ratios above regulatory requirements (Regulation 101)
- ensuring supervision standards are maintained during educator breaks, including during lunch breaks
- providing safe play spaces for children, which allow for adequate supervision, including safe fall zones, good traffic flow, maintenance of buildings and equipment, and minimising trip hazards
- providing staff rosters, and casual and relief staff lists
- developing procedures to inform casual and relief staff about the supervision strategies outlined in this policy and any specific supervision plans as documented for the service
- notifying the Regulatory Authority (DET) within 24 hours of:
 - a serious incident (refer to *Definitions*) occurring at the service, including when a child appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for (*Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 174(2)(a), Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 12, 176(2)(a)*)
 - a complaint alleging that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child has been compromised or that the law has been breached (*Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 174(2)(b), Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 175(2)(c), 176(2)(b)*)
- notifying parents/guardians of a serious incident (refer to *Definitions*) involving their child as soon as possible, but not more than 24 hours after the occurrence
- reporting notifiable incidents (refer to *Definitions*) to WorkSafe Victoria
- evaluating supervision procedures regularly in consultation with the Nominated Supervisors, educators and management representatives.

All Early Childhood Staff are responsible for:

- having a sound understanding of their duty of care and responsibilities in ensuring children are within a safe environment
- having a sound understanding of the Child Safe Standards and the Child Safe Environment Policy
- ensuring that the prescribed educator-to-child ratios are met at all times and that educators have required qualifications (*Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 169(3)&(4), Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 123, 355, 357, 360*)
- counting only those educators who are working directly with children at the service in the educator-to-child ratios (Regulation 122)
- ensuring any educators under the age of 18 years old are never left alone with the children
- ensuring a minimum of two educators are rostered on duty at all times children are in attendance at the service
- ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the service are adequately supervised (refer to *Definitions*) at all times they are in the care of that service (*Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 165(2)*)
- ensuring that the environment is scanned regularly during interactions with individuals and groups and ensure that all children are in sight or hearing of educators at all times

- considering the design and arrangement of the service environment to support active supervision. This may be supported by a supervision plan (refer to Attachment 1 – Supervision Procedure and Attachment 2 – Developing a supervision plan at your service)
- identifying high-risk activities, including excursions (refer to *Excursions and Service Events Policy*), through a risk management process, and implementing strategies to improve children’s safety e.g. increasing adult-to-child ratios above regulatory requirements (Regulation 101(2))
- ensuring supervision standards are maintained during educator breaks, including during lunch breaks
- evaluating supervision practices regularly in consultation with other educators and the Approved Provider.
- developing procedures to ensure that all children are accounted for, including by referring to attendance records (refer to *Definitions*) at various times throughout the day, both before and after outdoor activities
- adjusting supervision strategies to suit the service environment, educator skills, and age mix, dynamics and size of the group of children being supervised and the activities being undertaken
- maintaining a duty of care to children at all times
- communicating with other educators regularly to ensure adequate supervision at all times
- informing parents/guardians and volunteers at the service about the *Supervision of Children Policy* and the ways that they can adhere to its procedures
- ensuring doors and gates are closed at all times to prevent children from leaving the service unaccompanied or from accessing unsupervised/unsafe areas of the service
- deciding when to interrupt and redirect children’s play to ensure safety at all times
- ensuring that interactions with the children are meaningful and respectful
- identifying opportunities to support and extend children’s learning while also recognising their need to play without adult intervention
- conducting regular safety checks of the environment to assess safety and to remove hazards
- arranging the environment (equipment, furniture and experiences) to ensure effective supervision while also allowing children to access quiet/private spaces. In the outdoor environment precise emphasis will be on gates and fence line.
- providing direct and constant supervision when a child is near water (refer to *Water Safety Policy*)
- conducting a risk assessment prior to an excursion to identify risks to health, safety or wellbeing and specifying how these risks will be managed and minimised (refer to *Excursions and Service Events Policy*)
- notifying the Approved Provider in the event of a serious incident (refer to *Definitions*) occurring at the service or of a complaint being made alleging the health, safety or wellbeing of a child has been compromised
- assisting the Approved Provider and the Nominated Supervisors to evaluate supervision practices regularly
- supervising children’s daily departure from the service and being aware of the person who has authority to collect the child (refer to *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*).

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- ensuring educators are aware that their children have arrived or departed
- ensuring that doors and gates, including playground gates, are closed after entry or exit

- being aware of the movement of other children near gates and doors when entering or exiting the service
- enabling educators to supervise children at all times by making arrangements to speak with them outside program hours
- 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.

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
- record and monitor complaints and incidents in relation to the supervision of children and amend the policy and procedures as required
- 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.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Supervision Procedure
- Attachment 2: Developing a supervision plan at your service

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by Goulburn Region Preschool Assoc. Inc on August 2012.

Reviewed and Approved: 24th September 2016

Reviewed: 8th March 2019

Reviewed: August 2021

REVIEW DATE: AUGUST 2024

ATTACHMENT 1

Supervision Procedure

Services can identify high-risk experiences and develop strategies, depending on the age and development of children, where the constant supervision of children is required or where children may only require supervision from a distance. They will do this in the following ways:

- Educators are aware of the different ages, personalities, behaviours and characteristics of the child in their care to ensure that supervision is relevant and effective.
- Implement consistent supervision strategies and not perform other duties while responsible for the supervision of children.
- Be aware of the importance of communicating with each other about their location within the environment
- Actively supervising bathroom facilities
- Be aware of blind spots within the indoor and outdoor environment
- Provide close supervision for all children in areas that are near equipment where injury may occur by being in close proximity to the children
- Skillfully use redirection as an aid in preventing undesirable and unsafe behaviour
- Be alert to the surrounding environment by regularly glancing and listening within the environment to see children's involvement and what is happening
- Build knowledge of children, including knowing each child's range of skills, interests, ability to interact with others and developmental stage so that positive behaviour is promoted and guided by the educators
- Educators will position themselves to be aware of the entire environment and to see as many children as possible. All children are monitored by sight or sound at all times
- Develop and regularly maintain a supervision plan that is communicated to all staff, including relief staff

ATTACHMENT 2

Developing a supervision plan at your service

Consider the following elements when devising a supervision plan that is specific to your service. Consider how many children you have in your care, the type of program you are providing, the developmental stage of the children, the staffing ratios, best practice, how the plan will be communicated amongst staff (including relief staff) and how often it will be reviewed and revised.

Program model	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you run an indoor/outdoor program, and if so, how does each educator know where to be?• How is it communicated?
Arrival and departure time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is your procedure for ensuring safety of children at arrival and departure?• Do staff need to be in specific positions to ensure children are not leaving the service without being in the care of an authorised adult?
Positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you have specific places within your room or outdoor environment where educators should be positioned?• Are there any 'hot spots'? – ie: near climbing equipment, where children are using implements, where there is a cubby or enclosed space, etc
Communication between staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are there guidelines about how staff communicate to each other when moving between spaces?
Active Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does this look like at your service?• Are staff encouraged to supervise in different areas rather than talking together for periods of time?• Do staff regularly practice scanning and listening?• Do you have specific requirements about educators not having their back to the children where possible?
Plans for specific children	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify specific needs for individual children if necessary• Who formulates the plan – is there staff and family input?• How is this information stored?• How is this information shared amongst relevant staff?• How often is it updated?
Specific risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you have considered certain risks to be of benefit to the children, (for example: using knives to cut fruit, or using hammers and nails), do all educators understand and agree to the risk, and are they consistent in their management of the risk?

Interruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the phone rings – who answers and how is it managed whilst maintaining supervision? • If a contractor arrives and requires a staff person to assist with some enquiries, how do you ensure that supervision is maintained and that no adult who is not part of the ratios is left alone with the children?
Visitors to the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who greets the visitors/parents and how does that person maintain active supervision of the children whilst engaging with the visitor/parent? • If a parent is staying and participating in the program, are you making sure that they are never left alone with the children? • If you have a student at the service, do you make sure that they are never in a space alone with children? • Are students involved in behaviour management, and if so, to what extent?