



**Coowarra Out Of School Hours**

**Care Service Inc**

## **Adequate Supervision Policy**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Coowarra 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. 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:

- (a) Complying with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations at all times.
  - (b) Ensuring that children are supervised at all times;
  - (c) Considering the design and arrangement of children's environments to support active supervision;
  - (d) Using supervision skills to reduce or prevent injury or incident to children and adults;
  - (e) Guiding educators to make decisions about when children's play needs to be interrupted and redirected;
  - (f) Supporting educators and their supervision strategies;
  - (g) Providing consistent supervision strategies when there are staffing changes; and
  - (h) Acknowledging and understanding when supervision is required for high-risk experiences and/or the ratio of adults to children is increased.
- (i)(National Quality Standard 2.2, Element 2.2.1)

The Regulatory Authority must be notified within 24hrs if a child:

- Appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for;
- Appears to have been taken or removed from the service premises in a way that breaches the National Regulations;
- Is mistakenly locked in or out of the education and care service premises.



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#### PROCEDURE

##### Planning for Supervision

###### **Ratios:**

- (a) 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. This ratio will reduce to 1 Educator for when on an excursion outside of the service premises based on the risk assessment for that excursion.
- (b) Ratios will consider the number of Educators (their level of skill and experience) and the types of activities children are involved in. Positioning and supervision of children will vary at different times during the session. Educators will be aware of activities, which are of higher risk e.g outdoor play vs. indoor craft activity. Educators will constantly discuss and move to where higher risk activities are taking place. This could mean a 1 Educator to 20 children for a low risk craft activity and a 1:10 ratio for tree climbing or fire play... however the overall ratio remains at 1:15 across the service.

###### **Supervision Zoning:**

- (a) 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.
- (b) 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.
- (c) 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 Co-ordinator 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. For example, it would be unreasonable to expect a sole Educator supervising a school oval with 15 children on it to also be responsible for children as they walk between the oval and the indoor facility unless there is a clear view of their



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- (d) walking path. If the path is obstructed, it may be necessary to have a staff member positioned somewhere between the two locations. This would be described in that zones duty list. A strategy for children accessing toilet facilities will be included in the services zoning plans and duty list.

#### **Rosters:**

- (a) 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 Co-ordinator will take the number of expected children enrolled into consideration.
- (b) 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.

#### **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 educator's 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.

#### **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.



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- Undertaking a risk assessment is part of planning a routine outing or excursion. The risk assessment will need to take into account the levels of supervision and number of adults needed for the entire time the children are out of the service premises, residence or venue. Volunteers, such as parent helpers, may assist to provide additional supervision. Services might consider how attendance numbers will be verified at certain times during excursion, such as when leaving the venue or travelling on public transport. Strategies that may be used include head counts, or allocating a group of children to a particular adult or Educator.

#### **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.

#### **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.



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#### ***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, which may pose a risk to children's health, well-being or safety.
- Circulating the play areas where children are situated.

#### ***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.

### **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 is via walking, buses or other modes. A documented risk assessment will be available if the activities of children during these transitions are deemed 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.
- 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 head counts and rollcalls occur regularly.

### **End-of-day Procedures**

Services should consider how children are grouped at the end of the day.



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Educators must ensure that end of day duties, such as cleaning and securing premises, do not compromise adequate supervision of children. Before closing a centre-based service, Educators should look for visible cues that a child may still be on the premises (eg. a backpack left on a hook) and physically check each area, including store rooms, to ensure no child is accidentally locked inside.

#### **Partnerships with Children**

- Our service involves children in all aspects of the services 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 allow 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, which 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.
- Educator's 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 services values and beliefs whilst also supervising.

This helps to build meaningful relationships and helps to minimise challenging behaviours.



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#### CONSIDERATIONS

Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations	National Quality Standards & Elements	Links to other service policies	Other documentation/evidence
S51, 165, 166, 167, 170, 171  R 82, 83, 99, 100, 101, 102, 115, 123, 155, 168, 176	Standard 2.2  Element 2.2.1	-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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- My Time, Our Place.</li> <li>- Service newsletters/parent notices</li> <li>- Zone Maps and duty lists</li> <li>- Attendance records</li> <li>- Safety checks</li> <li>- Risk assessments</li> </ul>

UPDATED AND ENDORSED: January 2023

DATE FOR REVIEW AND EVALUATION: January 2026