

POLICY AIM

Educators have a duty of care to ensure children are supervised at all times, maintaining safe and secure environments whilst adhering to *Education and Care Services National Law* and *National Regulations*. Supervision, together with thoughtful design and arrangement of children's environments, assists in the prevention and severity of injury to children.

Educators will actively supervise children, identifying risks and taking all necessary steps to prevent or minimise injury. Effective supervision of children also provides educators with the opportunity to support and build on children's play experiences.

RATIONALE

Children need safe and secure environments to thrive in their life and learning. Effective supervision is integral to creating environments that are safe and responsive to the needs of all children. It also helps to protect children 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. (ACECQA, 2023)

SCOPE - WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY?

- Educators / Staff
- Children
- Families
- Management
- Visitors & Volunteers
- Students

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD

QUALITY AREA 2 - CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Standard 2.2 (Safety) - *Each child is protected.*
- Element 2.2.1 (Supervision) - *At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.*
- Element 2.2.2 (Incident and emergency management) - *Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.*

RELATED POLICIES & LEGISLATION

RELATED SWEETPEAS POLICIES:

- Administration of Medication Policy
- Arrival and Departure Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Emergency and Evacuation Policy
- Ethical Code of Conduct Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Handwashing Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Nappy Change and Toileting Policy
- Safe Transportation of Children Policy
- Sleep and Rest Policy
- Use and Storage of Dangerous Products Policy
- Use of Technology
- Volunteers, Students and Visitors Policy
- Water Safety Policy

RELATED EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS:

- Regulation 84A, 84B, 84C - sleep and rest requirements
- Regulation 101 - Conduct of risk assessment for excursions
- Regulation 102C(2)(g) - Supervision during transportation.
- Regulation 102E - Children embarking a means of transport - centre based service
- Regulation 102F - Children disembarking a means of transport - centre based service
- Regulation 115 - Premises designed to facilitate supervision
- Regulation 120 - Educators who are under 18 to be supervised
- Regulation 121 - Application of Division 3
- Regulation 122 - Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios

- Regulation 123 - Educator to child ratios-Centre based services
- Regulation 126 - Centre based services-general educator qualifications
- Regulation 132 - Requirement for early childhood teacher- centre based services 25-59 children
- Regulation 166 - Children not to be alone with visitors
- Regulation 168 - Education and care service must have policies and procedures
- Regulation 168(2)(ga) - Policies and procedures are required in relation to transportation.
- Regulation 168(2)(gb) - policies and procedures are required in relation to safe arrival of children.
- Regulation 176 - Time to notify certain circumstances to Regulatory Authorities
- Regulation 264 - General qualifications for educators - Centre based
- Law S165 - Offence to inadequately supervise children
- Law S167 - Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
- Law S174 - Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

TERMINOLOGY

- **Active supervision** - Educators promote children's learning and development by creating physical and social environments that have a positive impact. It is necessary for educators to be alert and aware of risks and hazards and the potential for accidents and injury, not only in their immediate location but also throughout the service. To provide effective supervision, educators need to be conscious of the physical environment and be attuned to the needs of individual children. (ACECQA, 2023)

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

- **ACECQA** - Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority

IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES

Adequate supervision in a centre-based service requires careful consideration depending on the different ages of children and varying abilities. Generally, the younger the child the more they will need adults close by to support and provide assistance. Supervision of infants and toddlers who are sleeping need careful consideration to ensure educators can see and hear children. (See *Sleep and Rest Policy*). Supervision of preschool age children may involve simultaneous use of indoor and outdoor environments and require effective supervision of children in both environments.

Active supervision of children can be achieved in a variety of ways, including:

- Careful planning of rosters to ensure that educators are always available to respond to children.
- Policies and procedures that address supervision clearly.
- Flexible supervision arrangements to allow for supervision of individual children or small groups, such as sleeping children or indoor and outdoor experiences offered simultaneously.
- Close observation of children to provide support and to extend on children's play experiences. Educators who closely observe children and are attuned to their needs and interests can recognise when children wish to play without adult involvement.
- Actively engaging with children to support their learning. Effective supervision requires a combination of observation and engagement. Educators need to assess and respond to children's supervision needs in conjunction with engaging with children to promote quality learning opportunities.
- Scanning or regularly looking around the area to observe all children in the environment ensures that all children are actively supervised. Educators who are aware of the environment can identify appropriate positions for maximum vision of children. Educators should avoid standing with their backs to children and undertaking tasks that will distract them from supervising children, such as administrative tasks.
- Listening carefully to children and noting any changes of tone or volume in their voice. Noting these changes can assist in supervising children who may not be in direct vision.
- Evaluating situations to determine the potential risks and benefits for children's health, safety and wellbeing.
- Observing children's play and anticipating what may occur next allows educators to assist children as difficulties arise and to intervene when there is a potential danger to children. (ACECQA, 2023)

APPROVED PROVIDER / MANAGEMENT WILL:

- Ensure that the premises and facilities are designed and maintained to facilitate adequate supervision of children at all times while maintaining the rights and dignity of all children.
- Ensure regulatory authorities are notified of any serious incident or complaints alleging the safety, health or wellbeing of children has been compromised within 24 hours of the incident or the time that the person becomes aware of the incident or complaint. This includes if an ambulance was call in response (not as a precaution) to the incident, situation or event. (see *Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy*)
- Ensure parents are notified as soon as practicable but within 24 hours if their child is involved in a serious incident/situation at the Service. Details of the incident/situation are to be recorded on the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record. (see *Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy*)
- Ensure educators under eighteen years of age may work at a centre-based Service only if they are adequately supervised by an educator over the age of 18 at all times and are not left alone with children at any time.
- Ensure minimum educator qualification requirements including how many educators are to be early childhood teachers, are recognised and adhered to according to legislative requirements.
- Ensure the Service maintains the required educator-to-child ratio working directly with children at all times, based on the ages and number of children being educated and cared for at the Service.

Age Group	Educator to Child Ratios
For children from Birth to 24 months of age (0-2 years)	1:4
For children aged 24 months and less than 36 months of age (2yrs)	1:5
For children aged 36 months of age or over (3 years+)	1:10
For school-aged children (OOSH only)	1:15

MANAGEMENT AND/OR THE NOMINATED SUPERVISOR / DIRECTOR WILL:

- Ensure that all educators are aware of where all children are at all times and monitor their environment closely.
- Ensure educators are able to respond to any situation immediately, particular when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation.
- Develop and maintain rosters that ensure continuity of care and adequate supervision at all times when children are being cared for and educated in the Service and on excursions.
- Ensure flexibility of supervision to provide for educators to supervise individual children or small groups of children.
- Ensure educators are aware that if they need to move away from children, another educator is to replace them. (e.g., collecting additional resources or attending to an individual child's needs).
- Conduct risk assessments and plan ongoing supervision taking into consideration the layout of the premises and grounds, any higher risk activities, the presence of any animals, the location of activities and the location of bathroom and nappy change facilities.
- Develop, maintain and regularly review a supervision plan and strategies for both the indoor and outdoor areas, which will support educators to position themselves effectively to allow them to observe the maximum area possible.
- Ensure educators employ 'active supervision' strategies at all times.
- Ensure educators avoid activities or actions that will distract them from supervision, such as speaking to other educators for long periods of time, taking personal phone calls, checking mobile phones or administrative tasks.
- Ensure educators are positioned to allow them to observe the maximum area possible.
- Ensure educators move around the environment to provide maximum vision of the area and avoid standing with their back to children or talking with other educators.
- Adopt accepted best practice; ensuring no staff member is left alone with a child to support child protection protocols.
- Ensure that a Risk Assessment and Management Plan is carried out before an authorisation is requested for an excursion. The risk assessment will consider and identify the number of adults

required to ensure continuous adequate supervision throughout the excursion. (see *Excursion Policy*)

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Monitor and maintain staff to child ratios to ensure adequate supervision of children.
- Have a sound understanding of their duty of care and responsibilities in ensuring children are within a child safe environment at all times.
- Communicate and collaborate with others to ensure the effective supervision of children within the Service.
- Alert other colleagues if they need to leave an area for a particular reason to ensure continuous supervision of children (e.g., to obtain resources, visit the bathroom)
- Adhere to a supervision plan and strategies for both the indoor and outdoor environment, assisting colleagues to position themselves in order to effectively supervise children's play. The supervision plan will include the floor plan of the Service and include the location of activities, bathroom, and nappy change facilities.
- Implement vigilant supervision strategies for hygiene requirements including:
 - regular handwashing;
 - toileting;
 - cough and sneeze routines- using disposable tissues and handwashing.
- Inform new and relief educators about supervision arrangements, outlining their supervision responsibilities.
- Regularly evaluate the efficiency of the supervision plan and make changes as required.
- Ensure any educator under the age of 18 years old is never left alone with children.
- Ensure that no student, visitor or volunteer is left alone with children (see *Volunteers, Students and Visitors Policy*)
- Ensure that at least one other educator is within sight when working with children and when supporting children with toileting/hygiene routines.
- Arrange the education and care environment to maximise the ability of educators to supervise all areas accessible to children. Emphasis will be on gates, the fence line and doors during arrival and departure times.
- Communicate with each other about their location within the environment and any relevant information about supervising individual children to ensure their needs are met.
- Maintain correct ratios adhering to the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* throughout the education and care environment, providing flexible rostering of supervision depending on the age of children and needs of individual children.
- Promote children's agency by making decisions about supervision that allows children to engage in independent exploration and appropriate risk taking.
- Actively engage with children to support their learning whilst actively supervising and observing children.
- Ensure that all children are in sight or hearing of educators at all times.
- Ensure that no child is left alone while eating or at nappy change and toileting times.
- Adequately supervise children during rest time in accordance with the *Sleep and Rest Policy* and relevant legislative requirements.
- Adequate supervision is provided when children are transported in a vehicle at all times (see *Safe Transportation Policy*).
- Ensure that hazardous equipment and chemicals are inaccessible to children. (see *Use and Storage of Dangerous Products Policy*)
- Scan the environment during interactions with individuals or small groups.
- Implement correct supervision strategies and not perform other duties while responsible for the supervision of children.
- Listen closely to children whilst supervising areas that may not be in a direct line of sight noticing changes in volume or tone of voice.
- Plan for a mixture of activities to allow for appropriate supervision of groups of children.

Consideration will be given to the design and arrangement of children's environments to support active supervision by:

- Using supervision skills to recognise areas of risk therefore reducing the potential for injury or incident to children and adults.

- Providing direct, constant and proximal monitoring to children undertaking activities that involve some risk and recognising when the ratio of educators to children needs to be increased (e.g., carpentry, water activities, climbing).
- Guiding educators to make decisions about when children's play needs to be interrupted and redirected.
- Supporting educators with specific strategies for supervision such as positioning, peripheral vision and monitoring children's arrival and departure from the service.
- Providing consistent supervision strategies when the Service requires relief educators.

REFERENCES

- ACECQA. (July 2023). Active Supervision: Ensuring safety and promoting learning. https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-04/QA2-ActiveSupervisionEnsuringSafetyAndPromotingLearning_1.pdf
- ACECQA. (Accessed March 2024). Educator to child ratios. <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/educator-to-child-ratios>
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (amended 2020).
- Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).
- Sweetpeas Philosophy

REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

This policy will be updated regularly to ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements. Appropriate consultation of all stakeholders (including staff and families) will be conducted on a timely basis. In accordance with *Regulation 172* of the National Regulations, families of children enrolled will be notified at least 14 days and their input considered prior to any amendment of policies and procedures that have any impact on their children or family.

Version	Amendment(s)	Review Date	Updated By
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy adapted from previous Sweetpeas policy 	June 2017	Cassandra Way (Educator/Admin) Janine Evans (Director)
1.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No changes required 	June 2018	Cassandra Way (Educator/Admin)
1.2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No changes required 	June 2019	Janine Evans (Director)
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Points added • Irrelevant information deleted • Grammar errors fixed • Formatting • NQS & Regulations added 	June 2020	Janine Evans (Director)
2.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No changes required 	June 2021	Janine Evans (Director)
2.2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No changes required 	July 2022	Janine Evans (Managing Director)
2.3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No changes required • Due for template upgrade 	July 2023	Janine Evans (Managing Director)

Version	Amendment(s)	Review Date	Updated By
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy updated to new template with cosmetic changes, and additional sections in line with other Sweetpeas policies Reworded Rationale Updated list of related policies Updated list of Regulations Updated for info on safe transport and sleep from Regulations update Updated references and checked hotlinks Fixed version numbering (July23 previously version 7) 	March 2024	<p>Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager)</p> <p>Janine Evans (Managing Director)</p>
3.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added ratio requirement for OOSH children Currently under review by Penrith team 	April-May 2025	<p>Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager)</p> <p>Penrith team</p>