

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN POLICY - OSHC

Updated: March 2025



What are we talking about in this document?

This policy is about ensuring children’s safety through supervision.



Who is this for?

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, students, and visitors of the service.



Why do we need this policy?

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.

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Key Terms

Term	Meaning	Source
ACECQA – Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework.	www.acecqa.gov.au
ECRU or Regulatory Authority	<u>Education and Care Regulatory Unit.</u> The Education and Care Regulatory Unit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assesses applications for provider approvals, service approvals assesses education and care services against the <u>National Quality Standard</u> supports and promotes continuous quality improvements in education and care services investigates incidents and complaints monitors and enforces compliance. 	WA Government Department of Communities

Reportable Conduct Scheme	The Reportable Conduct Scheme provides independent oversight of how organisations that exercise care, supervision or authority over children handle allegations of, and convictions for, child abuse by their staff.	https://www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au
Risk Assessment	Assessing the risk means working out how likely it is that a hazard will harm someone and how serious the harm could be.	https://www.acecqa.gov.au/media/29421
Rights of the Child	Human rights belonging to all children, as specified in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.	UNICEF The Convention on the Rights of the Child
Serious Incident	For the purposes of the definition of serious incident in section 5(1) of the Law, each of the following is prescribed as serious incident: (a) the death of a child- (i) while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service; or (ii) following an incident occurring while the child was being educated and cared for by an education and care service (b) any incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service- (i) which a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or (ii) for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital; (example: a broken limb) (c) any incident involving serious illness of a child occurring while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service for which the child attended, or ought reasonable to have attended, a hospital: (example: severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis reaction.) (d) any emergency for which emergency services attended (e) any circumstance where a child being educated and care for in an education and care service- (i) appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for, or (ii) appears to have been taken or removed from the education and care service premises in a manner that contravenes National Regulations; or (iii) is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the education and care service premises or any part of the premises.	National Regulations
Working directly with children	A person is working directly with children at a given time if at that time the person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is physically present with the children, and • is directly engaged in providing education and care to the children. 	National Regulations



The Important Stuff

The Education and Care Services National Law (WA) and National Regulations require approved providers to ensure that all children being educated and cared for at an approved service are adequately supervised at all times and are protected from harm and hazards. Active supervision, together with thoughtful design and arrangement of children’s environments, assists in the prevention and severity of injury to children.

Children of different ages and abilities will need different levels of supervision. Generally, the younger children are, the more they need an adult to be close by and support them. In OSHC services, educators must balance the need for close supervision with respect for the children’s age and developing independence.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme requires Keiki Early Learning to report any reportable allegation. Regarding the Supervision Policy, supervisory neglect is classified under ‘Significant Neglect’, one of the five categories of reportable conduct.

Supervisory neglect may occur when an individual (or individuals) responsible for the care of a child is unable or unwilling to provide adequate supervision or control. The neglect becomes significant when considering the impact of the failure to supervise, rather than the duration, severity, or gravity of the outcome. The Ombudsman defines significant as ‘deliberate or reckless failures, or failures that separately or together have had, or could have, considerable detrimental force or effect on the safety or wellbeing of the child who has been neglected’.

Actual harm is not required.



Supervision Procedures and Guidelines

Active supervision is essential for maintaining a safe and secure environment for children. It requires educators to be constantly aware of the children's whereabouts, anticipate potential risks, and take immediate action to prevent accidents. Effective active supervision not only ensures children's safety but also supports their development and learning by providing opportunities for positive interactions and engagement.

Considerations for Supervision

Children of varying ages and abilities require different levels of supervision, privacy, and autonomy. Generally, younger children need an adult nearby to support and assist them. For young children, adequate supervision often means staying close to the supervising adult.

For children who are sleeping, supervision is ensured when educators can see and hear them.

As children grow older, it is important to balance close supervision with respect for their developing independence.

Services for school-age children should also consider:

- The location of children's toilets and how they will be supervised when visiting and returning.
- Supervision during the transition between school and the outside school hours care (OSHC) service.
- Supervision of children's transportation to and from the OSHC service.

Note that supervision is facilitated by the physical design and maintenance of the premises (regulation 115), the supervision practices of educators (section 165), and educator ratios (regulations 122-124).

Active supervision steps

1. Set up the environment
 - Arrange the layout of the indoor and outdoor environment for adequate supervision that promotes visibility and accessibility.
 - Be aware of where the children are and how they will use the equipment.
2. Position educators
 - Face the majority of the group, be aware of where the children are and what they're doing and change positions accordingly.
 - Ensure activities where there is a higher level of risk such as water play are fully supervised at all times.

- Consider where other staff members are and communicate effectively with them, notifying each other when you are leaving an area or no longer actively working with children.
 - Use supervision plans to determine where to supervise, noting the high-risk areas.
3. Scan and count
 - Continually scan the environment to know where educators and children are and what they are doing and to identify any hazards.
 - Know which children are in attendance and where they are.
 4. Listen
 - Listen closely to children, especially those out of the direct line of sight, to identify potential danger (splashing water, crying, gasping/choking, bad language, silence).
 5. Anticipate behaviour
 - Use knowledge about each child's development, culture, abilities and interests to anticipate what they may do. Plan and adapt supervision strategies as required.
 6. Engage and redirect
 - When planning, consider which activities require direct involvement and those which allow greater autonomy. Plan experiences that will engage the children in attendance.
 - Adapt activities and supervision strategies in accordance with the children's interests and levels of engagement.

Educator practice, knowledge and training

Active and effective supervision is a shared responsibility among all educators and staff members. Creating a safe and nurturing environment requires constant vigilance and commitment to the wellbeing of the children.

Nominated Supervisors/Centre Coordinators will:

- Act as positive role models and support educators to adopt best practice.
- Provide educators with training to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities and can employ active supervision strategies at all times.
- Support educators to ensure headcounts are being done regularly, the frequency of these must meet the individual needs of the room and/or service.
- Document and review Supervision Plans that take into consideration the layout of the service, both indoors and outdoors, highlighting all high-risk areas.
 - Support educators to use Supervision Plans to identify high-risk areas and ensure they are adequately supervised at all times children are present.

Educators will:

- Communicate and collaborate with others to ensure the effective supervision of children within the service.
 - Alert other educators if they are no longer actively supervising children and need to complete other tasks or leave an area for a particular reason, requesting someone replace them (e.g.: set up for lunch or experiences, leave to obtain resources or visit the bathroom)
 - Communicate relevant information about individual children to ensure their needs are being met
 - Inform new and relief educators about supervision arrangements, outlining their supervision responsibilities
- Have a sound understanding of their duty of care and responsibilities in ensuring children are supervised and within a safe environment.
 - Ensure educators under the age of 18 are never left alone with children

- Ensure that all children are in sight or hearing of educators at all times
- Ensure no child is left alone while eating
- Ensure another educator is in sight when supporting children’s toileting and hygiene routines
- Listen closely to children, especially those who are out of their direct line of sight, noticing changes in volume or tone of voice.
- Scan the environment consistently remaining aware of the number of children in their care at all times.
- Undertake headcounts regularly, the frequency of these must meet the individual needs of the service.
 - The maximum time between headcounts will be one hour, however they will be done more frequently at times of arrivals/departures or transitions between spaces or activities.
 - Headcounts will be documented on the Xplor app where possible.
- Actively supervise bathroom facilities when being used by children, allowing privacy and the opportunity for independence dependent on children’s ages and abilities.
- Adhere to a supervision plan and strategies for both the indoor and outdoor environment.
 - Use the supervision plan as a guide, allowing for flexibility to move as required to maintain effective supervision.
 - Supervise identified high-risk areas at all times children are present.
 - Assist other educators to position themselves in order to effectively supervise children’s play.
- Actively engage with children to support their learning whilst actively supervising and observing children.
- Use their knowledge of the children to plan activities requiring differing levels of educator support, allowing for appropriate supervision of multiple groups of children.
- Engage in professional development.

Staffing and ratio requirements

The service adheres to all legislative requirements, including educator-to-child ratios and educator qualification requirements.

Nominated Supervisors/Centre Coordinators will:

- Ensure educators under 18 years of age are adequately supervised by an educator at least 18 years of age and are not left alone with children.
- Protect children by making sure that no staff member is ever left alone with a child, where they cannot be seen or heard.
- Understand and adhere to the legislation regarding minimum qualification requirements for educators, including the necessary number of early childhood teachers.
- 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. The below table serves as a guide. Coordinators will refer to the Regulations to ensure the correct number of qualified educators are present.

Age Group	Educator to Child Ratio
For children over preschool age <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If Kindergarten age children are in attendance or the total number of children is 12 or under 	1:13 ● 1:10

Note: for ratio requirements in all states or to calculate ratio requirements for mixed-age groups [click here](#).

- Develop staff rosters that will ensure an adequate number of educators for effective supervision, both while at the service or on excursions.

Educators will:

- Maintain correct ratios adhering to the National Education Regulations throughout the environment.
- Adjust staff positions, the environment and the planned activities as required, ensuring there is enough staff to adequately supervise children.

Risk management

To effectively supervise groups of children, educators need to conduct risk assessments and make professional judgements to determine an approach to supervision. This is a continuous process that includes both formal risk assessments as well as ongoing reflection and assessment. The environment, the children and the context of the activities children participate in must all be considered.

Nominated Supervisors/Centre Coordinators will:

- Develop, maintain and regularly review supervision plans 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.
 - Conduct risk assessments and use the information to develop supervision plans and strategies.
 - Take 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 the bathroom facilities.
 - The supervision plans must include the service's floor plan and all areas of the environment.
 - Display the relevant supervision plans in all rooms and the outdoor area.
- Consider the location and accessibility of bathrooms. In conjunction with educators develop plans specific to their setting to ensure children are adequately supervised and safe while using the bathroom. Things to be taken into consideration include:
 - the age and developmental stage of the children
 - the proximity of bathroom facilities to an educator, including line of sight
 - the time of day and number of other people on school grounds.
- Understand that risk management is an ongoing practice. Support educators to develop their risk assessment and management skills.
- Ensure hazardous equipment and chemicals are inaccessible to children, that educators have been trained in the correct use and storage of hazardous equipment and chemicals, and that safety data sheets are readily available.

Educators will:

- Regularly evaluate the efficiency of the supervision plan and make changes as required.
- Assess and manage risk as an ongoing part of their approach to supervision. Ensure supervision plans are used as a guide and adjust their position and activities as required.
- Ensure that hazardous equipment and chemicals are inaccessible to children by ensuring storage is secure and that all hazardous equipment and chemicals are used as directed.

Environment setup and maintenance

The way the service and environment layout both indoor and outdoor is arranged and managed is the starting point for effective supervision. Environments should be designed for maximum visibility while maintaining the rights and dignity of all children. Educators will observe how children interact with the environment to ensure it is both engaging and conducive to promoting their sense of agency and responsibility, while also ensuring their safety. Coordinators and Educators will conduct risk assessments as appropriate and use these assessments to make adjustments to the environment.

The Nominated Supervisor/Centre Coordinator will:

- Ensure that the premises and facilities are designed and maintained to facilitate effective supervision of children.
- Arrange furniture and play equipment to provide maximum visibility, whilst still allowing children to engage in solitary or small group play.
- Locate equipment that encourages risky play in areas that best allow for active supervision and educator proximity. Supervision plans will take into account the location of fixed equipment.

Educators will:

- Make adjustments to the environment as necessary. They will use their knowledge of the abilities and dispositions of the children in attendance and observations of how children are interacting with equipment to guide decision-making.

Serious incidents

ECRU must be 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. This includes if an ambulance was called in response (not as a precaution) to the incident, situation or event.

Notification of a serious incident is done via the NQA IT System as follows.

1. Log in to NQA ITS <https://public.nqaits.acecqa.gov.au/Pages/Landing.aspx>
2. Begin the notification or application by following the directions on NQA ITS and save.
3. Notify the General Manager that you have completed an application or notification and it needs to be checked. **DO NOT SUBMIT UNTIL APPROVED BY Compliance and Quality Manager OR OWNER.**
4. Once approved, submit the notification.

For more information on how to use the NQA ITS System, visit the following links:

https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-06/National_Quality_Agenda_IT_System_User_Guide_0.pdf

https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-05/NQA_ITS_incident_notifications_help_guide_0.pdf

Families must be 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.

Excursions and transportation

Excursions and transportation will be conducted with the children’s safety and wellbeing in mind. Risk assessments must be conducted, which will take into account the levels of supervision and adults needed and determine whether the minimum ratios are sufficient to provide adequate supervision (Regulations 100 and 101). All children must be accounted for when embarking or disembarking a method of transportation (Regulations 102E and 102F).

An Excursion Risk Assessment must be 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.

For more information refer to the [Excursion, Incursion and Safe Transportation Policy](#).

Arrival and departures

Arrival and departure times can pose a risk to children’s safety, especially transitions between the service and school.

Nominated Supervisors/Centre Coordinators will develop processes for transitions between the service and school, tailored to their service, and will ensure these are understood and followed by educators.

For more information refer to the [Arrival, Departure and Authorisation Policy](#).

Sleep, rest and relaxation

Each child’s need for sleep, rest and relaxation will be met by giving them the opportunity to rest, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of each child.

Children must be adequately supervised and checked during sleep or rest time following the [Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy](#).



Supporting Documents

Policies

[Arrival, Departure and Authorisation Policy](#)
[Child Protection Policy](#)
[Code of Conduct](#)
[Emergency Management Policy](#)
[Excursion, Incursion and Safe Transportation Policy](#)
[Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy](#)
[Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy](#)
[Sun Protection Policy](#)
[Water Safety Policy](#)

Other Documents

[Excursion Risk Assessment](#)
[Excursion Venue Assessment](#)

Supervision Plan Templates



Sources

- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).
- ACECQA. (2023). Active Supervision: Ensuring Safety and Promoting Learning.
- Early Childhood Australia. (2016). Code of Ethics.
- Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012. (2023).
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012. (2023).
- Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2022).
- Education and Care Regulatory Unit. Compliance Bulletin 13/10/2022. (2022).



Links to Regulations

National Quality Standard

Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety

2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.
2.2.3	Child protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

3.1	Design	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.
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Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

4.1	Staffing arrangements	Staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development.
4.2.2	Professional standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

Education and Care Services National Regulations

100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursions
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
120	Educators who are under 18 to be supervised
121	Application of Division 3
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
123	Educator to child ratios–Centre based services
126	Centre based services-general educator qualifications
132 – 134	Requirement for early childhood teacher
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
176	Time to notify certain circumstances to Regulatory Authorities
369	Educator to child ratios – children over pre-school age

Education and Care Services National Law

165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
169	Offence relating to staffing arrangements
174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority



Review & Document Control	
Policy Reviewed	Modifications
July 2023	Copied from Supervision of Children policy to create OSHC specific policy. Reviewed and updated information to ensure relevancy to OSHC services. Added guidance for bathroom supervision and headcounts.
August 2024	Added considerations for supervision and added link to the Rights of the Child.
March 2025	Added information about the Reportable Conduct Scheme. Made clear that the layout of the service and utilising the supervision plans is vital for ensuring adequate and active supervision. Added a process for completing other tasks and leaving supervision area to educators' responsibilities. Supervision Plans reworded, Nominated Supervisors are responsible for documenting and reviewing the plans and supporting educators to identify the high-risk areas. Educators are responsible for ensuring identified high-risk areas are supervised at all times.

Disclaimer

It is each employee, family and visitor to the service's responsibility to read, understand, follow and address any concerns with management about this policy.

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You can find it at: <https://keikiearlylearning.com.au/policies-and-procedures/>

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