

	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Supervision of Children Policy and Procedure</h2>
Version No.	Version 3.0 12 April 2023 (approved)
Authorisation	Director City Life
Expiry Date	Policy to be reviewed by December 2025
Responsible Officer	Manager Families and Children
Policy Owner	Early Childhood Coordinator

1. Purpose

Melton City Council is committed to:

- the provision of a safe and secure environment for all children at Melton City Council children's services
- Adequate, Direct and Active Supervision of all enrolled children is maintained at all times by Melton City Council children's services
- maintaining a Duty of Care to all children at children's 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.

1.1. This policy has been adapted from *PolicyWorks* Manual - National Quality Framework released by the Early Learning Association Australia.

2. Scope

This policy applies to services responsible for the direct education and care of children and applies to the Nominated Supervisor, Person in day-to-day charge/responsible person, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending Melton City Council children's services programs and activities, including during offsite excursions and activities.

3. Background

Supervision is essential in ensuring that children's safety is protected in the service environment and is an integral part of the care and education of children.

Supervision requires staff members to make ongoing assessments of the child and the activities in which they are engaged. Active supervision assists in the development of positive relationships between educators, children and their families, and informs ongoing assessment and future planning. Adequate Supervision requires teamwork and good communication between educators.

4. Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy and related procedures. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *Glossary of Terms*.

Word/Term	Definition
Adequate Supervision	(In relation to this policy) Supervision entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an

Word/Term	Definition
	<p>educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from Hazards that may emerge in play, including Hazards created by the equipment used.</p> <p>Adequate Supervision refers to constant, active and diligent Supervision of every child at the service. Adequate Supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe and/or hear each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary.</p> <p>Variables affecting supervision levels include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number, age and abilities of children • number and positioning of educators • current activity of each child • areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility) • developmental profile of each child and of the group of children • experience, knowledge and skill of each educator • need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies) • sole workers responding to care needs.
Attendance Record	Kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering and collecting the child, or of the Nominated Supervisor or educator (National Regulations 158(1))
Duty of Care	A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.
Hazard	A source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human Injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record	<p>Contains details of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs while the child is being educated and cared for by the service. Any incident, injury, trauma or illness must be recorded as soon as is practicable but not later than 24 hours after the occurrence.</p> <p>Details required include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name and age of the child • circumstances leading to the incident, injury, trauma or illness (including any symptoms) • time and date • details of action taken by the service including any medication administered, First Aid provided or medical personnel contacted • details of any witnesses • names of any person the service notified or attempted to notify, and the time and date of this • signature of the person making the entry, and time and date of this. <p>These details need to be kept for the period of time specified in National Regulations 183. A sample <i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record</i> is available on the Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) website (see <i>Sources</i>).</p>

Word/Term	Definition
Notifiable Incident	An incident involving workplace health and safety that is required by law to be reported to WorkSafe Victoria. Notification is required for incidents that result in death or serious injury/illness, or dangerous occurrences. For a complete list of Incidents that must be reported to WorkSafe Victoria, refer to the Guide to Incident Notification on the WorkSafe Victoria website (see <i>Sources</i>).
Serious Incident	<p>An Incident resulting in the death of a child, or an injury, trauma or illness for which the attention of a registered medical practitioner, emergency services or hospital is sought or should have been sought. This also includes an incident in which a child appears to be missing, cannot be accounted for, is removed from the service in contravention of the Regulations or is mistakenly locked in/out of the service premises (National Regulations 12).</p> <p>A Serious Incident should be documented in an <i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record</i> (sample form available on the ACECQA website) as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident. The Regulatory Authority (Department of Education & Training (DET)) must be notified within 24 hours of a Serious Incident occurring at the service (National Regulations 176). Records are required to be retained for the periods specified in the National Regulations 183.</p>

5. Responsibility/Accountability

5.1. The Approved Provider, according to Regulations is responsible for the implementation of this policy. This will be achieved through the Leadership Group and their service staff:

- complying with the legislated educator-to-child ratios at all times (National Law: Sections 169, National Regulations 123, 355, 357 and 360)
- counting only those educators who are working directly with children at the service in the educator-to-child ratios (National Regulations 122)
- a minimum of two educators are rostered on duty at all times children are in attendance at the service except in the case of Family Day Care
- that children being educated and cared for by the service are Adequately Supervised at all times they are in the care of that service (National Law: Section 165, National Regulations)
- considering the design and arrangement of the service environment to support active supervision. This may be supported by a supervision plan
- identifying high-risk activities, including incursions and excursions, through a risk management process, and implementing strategies to improve children's safety (e.g. increasing adult-to-child ratios above regulatory requirements) (National Regulations 101)
- supervision standards are maintained as per the regulations during educator breaks, including during meal 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
- notifying the Regulatory Authority (DET) within 24 hours of:

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- a Serious Incident occurring at the service, including when a child appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for (National Law: Section 174, National Regulations 12, 176)
- a complaint alleging that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child has been compromised or that the law has been breached (National Law: Section 174, National Regulations 175)
- notifying parents/guardians of a Serious Incident involving their child as soon as possible
- reporting Notifiable Incidents to WorkSafe Victoria
- evaluating supervision procedures regularly in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor, educators and management representatives.

5.2. The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- ensuring that the prescribed educator-to-child ratios are met at all times and that educators have required qualifications (National Law: Sections 169, National Regulations 123, 355, 357 and 360)
- counting only those educators who are working directly with children at the service in the educator-to-child ratios (National Regulations 122)
- ensuring a minimum of two educators are rostered on duty at all times children are in attendance at the service except in the case of Family Day Care
- considering the design and arrangement of the service environment to support active supervision. This may be supported by a supervision plan
- identifying high-risk activities, including incursions and excursions through a risk management process, and implementing strategies to improve children's safety (e.g. increasing adult-to-child ratios above regulatory requirements) (National Regulations 101)
- 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.

5.3. All staff and educators are responsible for:

- providing Adequate Supervision at all times
- being alert to, and aware of, risks and Hazards and the potential for incidents and injury throughout the service, not just within their own immediate area, and using supervision skills to reduce or prevent incident or injury to children and adults
- developing procedures to ensure that all children are accounted for, including by referring to Attendance Records at various times throughout the day, both before and after outdoor activities
- adjusting supervision strategies to suit the program risks or environment, educator skills, and age mix, additional needs, excursions, 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 (including when the child is on the premises but not signed into or out of the care of the service and the parent/guardian or person delivering or collecting the child is responsible for supervising that child)
- 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 Procedure* 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
- identifying opportunities to support and extend children's learning while also recognising their need to play without adult intervention
- conducting daily 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
- providing direct and constant supervision when a child is near water
- conducting a risk assessment prior to an incursion and excursion to identify risks to health, safety or wellbeing and specifying how these risks will be managed and minimised
- notifying the Approved Provider in the event of a Serious Incident 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 Supervisor 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.

5.4. Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- ensuring educators are aware that their child(ren) 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
- not to enable a child (who is not your child) to exit or enter without a staff member being made aware
- 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.

5.5. Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

6. References, Sources, Links to Legislation and Other Documents

6.1. Please refer to Reference and Sources page.

6.2. Related service policies:

- *Complaints and Grievances Policy and Procedure*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy and Procedure*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy and Procedure*
- *Excursions and Service Events Policy and Procedure*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy and Procedure*
- *Interactions with Children Policy and Procedure*

- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Procedure*
- *Staffing Policy and Procedure.*

7. Procedure

In terms of the number of children in care

Family Day Care (FDC)

- Comply with the laws, regulations and FDC educator agreement ratios e.g. no more than four children who have not started school may be cared for at any one time and no more than seven children up to the age of thirteen years including the educator's own children and foster care children.
- These numbers are a maximum and may be reduced at the discretion of the Family Day Care Coordination Unit.
- FDC educators may not engage in any other form of childcare, whilst FDC enrolled children are in attendance.
- All children in the care of the FDC educator must be registered with the FDC Coordination Unit prior to commencing care. This includes nieces, nephews and grandchildren, or other children not related to the educator.
- Educators own children cease to be counted in the FDC numbers after they turn 13 years or as prescribed in the educator agreement.

Vacation Care Program (VAC)

- A minimum of two staff will be onsite with children at all times regardless of minimum number of children at the service.
- Ratios requirements for VAC are per the regulations
- Ratios may be rostered above the minimum regulations according to identified risks e.g. excursions, additional needs, group dynamic, staff capacity or experience, specific activities e.g. water play

In terms of supervision and safety

- It is the responsibility of all educators to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children attending the children's service.
- This will be attained through supervision and general safety practices.
- Educators will inform any relievers, students or volunteer helpers of their duties and any specific supervision plans or risks.
- Prior to outside play educators undertake a full yard check for any potential risks to be minimised.
- Communication with parents/guardians is an integral part of the service and it is the responsibility of the educator to ask the parent/guardian to speak with them at a time or place which allows the educator to adequately supervise the children at all times.
- Children must never be left unsupervised.
- In the case of FDC where children are in overnight care, the educator will remain at the residence and be available to tend to any needs of the child throughout the night.
- A minimum of two staff/educators will be onsite with children at all times as per Regulations, except in the case of FDC.
- Staff/educators will position themselves to properly supervise the indoor area and/or outdoor area, bathrooms, exits and entry areas, busy or risky activities.
- Staff will move as the dynamics and risks of play areas / activities change and use skills such as scanning and clear team communication to maintain adequate supervision

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- Staff/educators will be aware of children in the bathroom at all times and supervise them appropriately maintaining privacy, promoting independence and respect.