

PROVIDING A CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

PURPOSE

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre recognises the importance of providing a safe environment for all children at our service. All children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that safeguards and promotes their health and safety.

Our service has a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that the rights and best interests of the child are paramount and that we will provide training, resources, information and guidance to support this in order to:

- Ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected at all times;
- Ensure that people educating and caring for children at the service act in the best interests of the child;
- Protect and advocate the rights of all children to feel safe, and be safe, at all times;
- Maintaining a culture in which children's rights are respected;
- Encouraging active participation from families at the service, supporting a partnership approach and shared responsibility for children's health, safety, wellbeing and development.
- Provide both physical and online environments that are safe and healthy for children, staff and families.

BACKGROUND AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Section 167 of the Education and Care Services National Law (Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards), requires that services must ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children being educated and cared for by the service from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury.

Achieving safe environments requires a number of policies and procedures including but not limited to policies on:

- Supervision Policy and Procedures
- Food safety Policy and Procedures
- Transportation Policy and Procedures
- Excursion Policy and Procedures
- Incidents, injuries, trauma, and illness Policy and Procedures
- Sun protection Policy and Procedures
- Water safety Policy and Procedures
- First aid Policy and Procedures
- Child Safe Policies and Procedures
- Health and hygiene practices including for example handwashing and nappy changes.

This policy focuses on environments using a risk management approach to providing children with safe environments under the following headings:

- Physical environment
- Digital images and online safety
- Information technology and social media
- Tobacco, alcohol and drug free environments.

The Physical Environment

In "The Guide to the National Quality Framework" reasonable precautions that an assessor may observe might include:

- daily safety checks of the environment and equipment
- maintenance of buildings, equipment and the general environment
- removing identified hazards immediately or securing the area to prevent children from accessing the hazard
- risk minimisation plans for identified health needs
- attending to children at all times when they are eating or drinking
- closely supervise when there is a higher risk of injury, for example nappy change tables,
- secure storage of hazardous products including chemicals and using simple signage and clear labelling
- an equipment maintenance schedule
- risk assessments including for excursions
- hot drinks and hot food being made and consumed away from children
- purchasing products that meets Australian Standards - for example, cots and playground equipment and under-surfacing
- being unable to access power points, double adaptors or power boards and the use of protective caps
- soft fall surfaces meet the requirements under the Australian Standards for Playgrounds
- Safe sleeping practices are implemented
- Animals that may pose a risk to children are kept apart from children unless directly supervised
- procedures for releasing children only into the care of authorised persons
- providing a tobacco, drug, alcohol free environment.

Playground Equipment Safety

Playground injuries often occur when a child falls from play equipment onto a hard surface. Playground equipment that measures 600mm or more above ground level requires a falling space and impact area. The falling space and impact area is a safety zone that surrounds the equipment and is free of obstacles.

Free height of fall is measured from ground level to the intended point of body support e.g. foot, hand, seat or platform.

The maximum height of platforms for playground equipment varies as follows:

- All Age settings (schools and public playgrounds) is 3000mm above ground level.
- Education and Care services is 1800mm above ground level.

Moveable Play Equipment

A minimum impact area of 1500mm is required surrounding moveable play equipment items measuring 600mm or more above ground level. An impact area of less than 1500mm is required for moveable play equipment less than 600mm above ground level. An impact area of 1000mm is recommended surrounding low equipment items that are designed for climbing, rocking or spinning.

Impact Area

The impact area is measured from a point directly below the elevated part of the equipment where the equipment measures greater than 600mm above ground level. For static equipment with platforms 600-1500mm above ground level the impact area is 1500mm. AS 4685.1 specifies a graded system of impact area for platform heights of more than 1500mm. The impact area between static equipment can overlap."

Setting up Moveable Play Equipment

Moveable play equipment is a range of purpose-made manufactured equipment used in supervised settings (e.g. supervised early childhood services, schools etc.) that is not permanently fixed in place and can be adjusted and moved by educators on a regular basis to vary play opportunities (AS 4685). This includes trestles; jouncing boards/cleated planks; balancing beams; cubby houses; castles; play cubes and portable slides and rockers. It may also include removable or interchangeable play items that are designed to connect to a fixed structure.

Moveable play equipment areas must be carefully planned to ensure safety and challenge.

Site selection criteria include:

- Level - the site should have at least one level/even area.
- Drainage - the site should be gently sloping with adequate elevation and contour to ensure good drainage.
- Access - the area should be free of trip and slip hazards. It should be easily accessible and set up to avoid congestion.
- Shade - adequate shade is important irrespective of the temporary setup of equipment.
- Surfacing - certified surfacing is required for equipment items that measure more than 600mm above ground level.

A minimum impact area of 1500mm should be applied around and between each piece of movable equipment that is not linked (AS 4685).

Playground Surfacing

All playground equipment with a fall height 600mm or more above ground level and specific equipment items such as slides, swings, carousels, cableways, rocking and spinning items must have an impact attenuating surfacing beneath and around (impact area) it to minimise serious head or other injuries in the event of a fall.

The two main types of playground surfacing are loose-fill and solid (unitary) material. Playground surfacing must meet the test requirements of "AS 4422 Playground surfacing" and the supplier should provide documented evidence for your records that it complies to the Australian Standard.

AS 4685.0: Playground equipment and surfacing requires loose-fill surfacing to be installed at a minimum depth of 300mm and maintained at not less than 200mm. Install and maintain loose-fill surfacing at a greater depth to allow for product loss and dispersion as children use the play space

Inspect loose-fill material regularly, rake to remove sharp and organic debris. Do not rotary hoe as this disturbs the subsurface and can bury and mix contaminants.

Preventing Burns and Scalds

Before children enter the play space, use a thermometer to check the temperature of the playground surface. Alternatively, hold your hand just above the surface to determine if the playground surface is too hot. If the surface temperature feels too hot or is 50 degrees or more it is too hot for play.

Suggestions:

- Install light coloured surfacing
- Install shade structures or plant trees
- Wait for a cooler time of day

During the hotter months, playground equipment and surfaces, such as metal, concrete, stone, sand, rubber, plastic, soft fall mats and synthetic grass, can heat up rapidly and retain heat, which is a serious burns risk to children. Young children are more susceptible to heat-related illness and injuries than adults. Their bodies cannot easily adapt to changing temperatures and they are less likely to respond quickly to heat affected surfaces.

Consider these 5 things to help prevent scalds and burns from overheated play equipment and objects:

- Regularly check the temperature of outdoor facilities and equipment on hot, sunny days to see if they are safe for children

to use. This is crucial for surfaces that children may touch, kneel, sit or lie on.

- Make sure all equipment and surfaces are suitable for outdoor use by checking manufacturers' warnings and instructions.
- Consider if children should wear shoes outside.
- Consider if shade structures should be moved throughout the day or seasonally to protect areas such as play equipment from direct sunlight.
- support staff to understand how to test outdoor surface temperatures.

Other considerations for caring for children in hot weather:

- Stay hydrated and well nourished. Ensure each child has easy access to plain water and encourage them to drink it, even before they become thirsty.
- Build staff awareness about the prevention, monitoring and identification of heat related risks.
- Discourage spraying surfaces with water to cool them down. If insufficient quantities of water are used, burns/scalds can occur through contact as water/steam conducts thermal energy more efficiently than concrete.
- Modify routine activities during excessive heat.
- Ensure foods are stored safely.
- Revise first aid procedures in the event of a child or staff member experiencing heat related illness or injury.

Create infrastructure that reduces exposure to heat. For example, room ventilation, access to additional fans, and shade provision (e.g. trees, shade sails, natural vegetation)."

Timber in Play spaces

AS 4685 requires that treated timber used for above or in-ground construction of playground items including equipment, fencing, garden walls, park furniture, picnic tables, exterior seating etc. exclude timber treated with CCA or creosote preservatives.

AS 4685 requires timber used above ground is:

- treated in accordance with the AS 1604 series for Hazard Class H3, (excluding CCA and creosote); or
- durability Class 1 or Class 2 in accordance with AS 5604 (provisions apply).

Timber used in contact with the ground is:

- treated in accordance with the AS 1604 series for Hazard Class H4, (excluding CCA and creosote); or
- durability Class 1 or Class 2 in accordance with AS 5604 (provisions apply).

Appropriately treated timber for use in play spaces includes timber that has been treated with:

- Alkaline Copper Quaternary - ACQ
- Copper Azole - CA

- Light Organic Solvent Preservative - LOSP (note: not suitable for ground contact)

Maintaining Timber

For existing playground equipment and items constructed with timber treated with CCA or creosote that is in good condition, seal with an oil-based polyurethane or paint regularly. It is also recommended for all timber items to be coated with an oil-based paint or linseed oil to prolong longevity. Regularly inspect timber items (such as furniture, stepping logs, forts, jouncing boards etc.) for:

- Wear and tear - repair or replace timber as required.
- Splitting - caulk gaps or replace timber as required.
- Splintering - sand smooth to remove splinters and burrs on a regular basis.
- Water penetration - repair and seal timber. Replace timber when required.
- Warping - plane and/or secure with additional screws.
- Protruding nails, screws and bolts - ensure that nails/screws are embedded, finished flush to the surface or countersunk. Domed headed screws may be utilised. Ensure bolt threads do not protrude more than 8mm. Check that threads do not present burrs or splinters - sand to a smooth finish. Consider using stainless steel self-tapping screws to secure timber boards."

Procedures and Responsibilities

Protecting children and each other is a team approach.

Leadership and Management Responsibilities, including Approved Providers, Nominated Supervisors and Responsible Persons will:

- Positively and clearly communicate all aspects of the policy and take a zero-tolerance approach to non-compliance.
- Understand and comply with all aspects of this policy and related legislation and support team members to do the same.
- Lead a culture of reflection and regular review of policies, seeking feedback from educators, families, children and other community agencies and professionals as appropriate.
- Work with educators to identify risks and establish risk assessments with effective control measures.
- Ensure risk assessments and strategies for minimising risks are shared with all members of the team.
- Maintain all equipment and facilities in a safe condition and report any damage, maintenance or upkeep immediately to the Approved Provider.
- Discuss safety, supervision and playground set up with educators on a regular basis. Document discussions or agreed action plans.
- Notify the Approved Provider of any circumstance at the service that poses a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a

child attending the service. The Approved Provider is to consider if reporting to the Regulatory Authority is required.

- Nominated Supervisors are responsible for monitoring educator compliance with the required safety checks.
- Where renovations or improvements are being conducted a management plan will be designed in consultation with educators and families to protect the safety of children, families and staff while work is being undertaken at the service. Under section 173(2)(c) of the National Law Act the Approved Provider must ensure that they notify the regulatory authority within 7 days of any proposed change to the premises, such as refurbishment. It is preferred that this is done at the earliest opportunity and in advance of the changes.
- Develop with the team supervision plans where the layout of a space has higher supervision needs and communicate to all members of the team.
- Monitor external fences to ensure that children cannot go through, over or under it.
- Nominated Supervisors will monitor the purchase of equipment to ensure products meet Australian Standards applicable—for example, cots and playground. Nominated Supervisors will purchase from trusted suppliers.
- Ensure fall surfaces meet Australian Standards that the levels in loose surfaces where there is a fall height over 600mm are maintained at a minimum of 200mm after being raked and evenly distributed.
- Provide staff with strategies to offer outdoor play during hotter months, including how to test outdoor temperatures and suitable strategies for cooling equipment and resources where needed without creating additional risks.
- Ensure any playground renovations include planning on appropriate fall zones and impact areas and that timber meets the AS 4685 requirements and does not include CCA or Creosote.
- Regularly inspect timber items and ensure they are sealed or painted regularly to prolong longevity and minimise risk of injury.
- Nominated Supervisors should refer to the ACECQA document "Risk Assessment and Management Tool" to minimise the risk of harm while maintaining an enriching learning and working environment.

Educators and Other Team Members will:

- Be proactive in fulfilling the requirements of this service policy and related legislative requirements.
- Seek further guidance where required to fulfil your requirements.
- Report any concerns or non-compliance immediately to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Participate in the review of documents and provide constructive feedback to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.

- Follow the Supervision Policy and Procedure and be active in supervising all children.
- Discuss risky play with children and establish strategies for safe play.
- Follow safety advice from recognised authorities and manufacturers when arranging equipment, furniture and learning experiences.
- Consistently implement safety checks and monitoring the maintenance of buildings, equipment and the general environment on a daily basis.
- Ensure that safety plugs are inserted in all un-used electrical outlets.
- Ensure all due care is taken to look after centre equipment, equipment such as wooden jumping boards, blocks, books etc are to be brought in undercover if it starts to rain. These items must be stored undercover overnight.
- Check all outdoor equipment day and record any issues on the playground checklist or maintenance list.
- Record any damaged equipment and ensure that it is removed from use and reported to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Follow any supervision plans where the layout of a space has higher supervision needs.
- Monitor external fences to ensure that children cannot go through, over or under it.
- Adhere to manufacturers' advice when using and cleaning furniture and equipment.
- Know the individual needs and action plans for the children in your care.

Fall heights, fall zones and playground surfacing

- Regularly check solid surfaces for wear and tear and immediately report any damage or obvious signs of wear to the Nominated Supervisor.
- Regularly check all loose-fill such as bark mulch or sand around climbing areas. These must be maintained at a minimum depth of 200mm. Rake surfaces to even out material and remove any debris. If after raking, the minimum depths of 200mm is not achieved, immediately notify the Nominated Supervisor.
- Take care when setting up playgrounds to ensure that appropriate fall surfacing is provided to all mobile equipment with a fall height over 600mm.
- Maintain a minimal impact area (fall zone) of 1 metre between each piece of equipment that is not linked in all directions where children may fall.
- Ensure that where equipment has a fall height of greater than 600mm it is set up on fall surfacing complying with Australian Standards and that a fall zone of 1 metre in all fall directions is clear of any items that a child may fall onto.

- Constantly monitor outdoor playground to ensure that items such as bikes are not abandoned by children within fall zones of climbing equipment and built in structures to avoid a child falling onto them.
- Where mats are used as fall surfacing all care and close supervision must be taken to ensure that mats stay in position and provide the required 1500mm impact area surrounding the equipment at all times.

Outdoor learning spaces and hot weather

- Before children enter play spaces that have been exposed to the sun during the day, use a thermometer to check the temperature of a range of outdoor surfaces, including artificial grass, mats, decks, pathways, bikes and climbing equipment. Where a thermometer is not available, hold your hand just above the surface to determine if the playground surface is too hot.
- If the surface temperature feels too hot or is 50° or more, it is too hot for play. It may be cooled by,
 - o turning mats over,
 - o removing hot items like climbing or bikes into areas not accessible to children while they cool down,
 - o placing a mat or other suitable item over a surface.
 - o don't use water to cool large areas as it can create steam, add to humidity and create additional risks associated with pooling water or slippery surfaces.
- Mats and other equipment that may potentially heat up should be moved undercover during the middle of the day to avoid them getting hot.
- When temperatures are warmer, children must wear shoes when outside to protect bare feet, educators should also be mindful that children may kneel, sit or lie down on surfaces so shoes are not the only solution to warm surfaces.

Risk Management Approach

- Use a risk management approach when planning learning environment and activities:
 - o Identify hazards
 - o Assess the risk
 - o Control Risks
 - o Implement Plan for controlling risks
 - o Monitor and review
- Proactively identify and manage risks and take precautions to protect children from harm and hazard both in the moment and by collaboratively developing risk assessments. Share with the Nominated Supervisor and other educators to ensure all control measures are identified and implemented.
- Identify and respond confidently to changes in the service environment throughout the day, adjusting practice where necessary to ensure that children are safe and effectively supervised at all times.

- Conduct a risk assessment of shelving and furniture should be conducted at least annually or at times when rooms are rearranged to ensure these items are safe and secure and not able to be pushed or pulled onto a child.
- Consider their knowledge of each child when planning activities and environments that allow a balance of “manageable risks” and supporting children’s development and decision making around taking on new challenges.
- Demonstrate trust and respect for children’s abilities to make sensible decisions and to keep challenges within their current capacities.

Learning environments and programs

- Take many opportunities, both planned and spontaneous, to communicate safety messages with children including:
 - o correct use of equipment and the environment and, where appropriate, involve children in setting safety rules.
 - o Safety in relation to electrical, water, sun, road, stranger danger etc.
- Support children to make choices and to experience the consequences of these where there is no risk of harm to themselves or another person.
- Ensure children and young people participate in decision making in matters affecting them, including in relation to safety issues and risk identification.
- Consider children’s abilities and weigh the benefits of risky play to support each child’s development.
- Pre-empt potential conflicts or challenging behaviours by monitoring children’s play and supporting interactions.
- Encourage children to pack toys away after use where they may impact safety.

Digital Images of children and online safety

Our service recognised the part that technology plays in our modern society and is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of each child when using online environments.

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre’s commitment to Child Safe Standards and culture includes online safety practices. We follow the recommendations of the eSafety Commissioner and Child Safe arrangements under the National Quality Framework in relation to children’s wellbeing and safety in online environments. The following information explains our daily practices, use and storage of children’s images online for families to make decisions on permission for the use of their child’s image.

How are images of children within photos/videos taken at Elder Street ECHC?

- Photos and videos of the children are taken as part of our educational program. They are one-way educators collect data

on the children's learning for the purpose of assessment and communication about learning with families.

- No private electronic devices such as phones or tablets are used for documenting children's learning or images. Educators do not have their personal electronic devices on their person when working with children. All photos/videos are taken by staff on one of four iPhone devices which are owned, monitored and secured within the centre premises by the Nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider. These include; Possum room device, Joey room device, Wallaby room device and Excursion device. These devices remain on the premises unless taken for an excursion with the children.
- There are several iPads located in the classroom environments which are used for; marking attendance, educational research and occasionally capturing images or videos of children. These iPads are owned, monitored and stored securely within the centre premises by the Nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider.

How are images of children within photos/videos stored?

- Photos/Videos are downloaded and stored on portable hard drives. Each class has their own portable hard drive for storage. After images are downloaded to the hard drive, they are deleted from the room iPhone device. The centre also has three main portable hard drive used to back up all laptop and desktop computers which is stored securely on the centre premises. Our educational leader has a clearly labelled hard drive used to store images and videos for documentation purposes as well as social media posts. Educators each have a USB drive for the purpose of programming. These USB's are stored in a lock box in the office building.

When and where are images of children within photos/videos used?

- There are 6 key areas that images of children within photos/videos taken within the centre are used. These include;
 1. The daily photo slideshow, which is emailed to enrolled families from the child's room each day. If we do not have permission to take a child's photo and use their image in daily slideshows, there can't be any photos taken of that child showing group education and care. There will only be individual photos that will be used in individual learning documentation which is emailed directly to the child's family only.
 2. The weekly pedagogical journal, which is emailed to enrolled families from the child's room at the end of each week.
 3. Used as a part of individual learning record in both individual learning and group learning images.
 4. On display within the centre for documentation purposes including project books

5. Used in social media posts on the Centre's Facebook and Instagram accounts.
6. Used on the Elder Street ECHC website.

Students and Trainees

- Students within the centre may only use photos/videos of children in their study documentation that do not show children's faces. Students/educators taking these images will still require individual permission from families before including names and photos of specific children in their study documents.

Procedures and Responsibilities

Leadership responsibilities including Approved Providers, Nominated Supervisors, responsible persons will:

- Positively and clearly communicate all aspects of the policy and take a zero-tolerance approach to non-compliance.
- Understand and comply with all aspects of this policy and related legislation and support team members to do the same.
- Lead a culture of reflection and regular review of policies, seeking feedback from educators, families, children and other community agencies and professionals as appropriate.
- Establish online safety expectations such as acceptable programs, websites and apps that can be viewed by children or used by children. Only child-friendly search engines and child-friendly apps should be approved – visit the eSafety Commissioner for advice on how to choose good online content for children under 5
<https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/children-under-5/how-choose-good-online-content>
- Research requested apps and programs prior to approving use to determine educational use and safe content for users.
- Monitor to ensure that only approved digital programs and apps are used at the service.
- Use filtering programs to restrict access to inappropriate or unauthorised sites.
- Ensure that any apps, online games, smart toys and technology toys used at the service are appropriate/designed for the children's developmental stage and age group.
- Share information with families on technologies used and the educational benefits.
- Check the risks of smart toys and, where possible, disconnect them from the internet to avoid hacking.
- Turn off chat functions on apps and games.
- Choose app settings that turn off location sharing and enable privacy controls.
- Ensure devices are only used in designated areas of the service, where staff can actively monitor children's use.
- Provide families with information on where to go for help with online safety issues, including the eSafety Commissioner.

- Ensure staff are clear on the recommendations for sedentary screen time and restrict to use over 2yrs and no more than 1hr per day.
- Encourage active screen use such as dancing or yoga.

Educators and other team members will:

- Be proactive in fulfilling the requirements of this service policy and related legislative requirements.
- Seek further guidance where required to fulfil your requirements.
- Report any concerns or non-compliance immediately to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Participate in the review of documents and provide constructive feedback to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Follow the recommendations for sedentary screen time and restrict to use over 2yrs and no more than 1hr per day.
- Incorporate active screen use such as dancing or yoga.
- Only use Apps, website and view programs with children approved by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor
- Share information with families on technologies used and the educational benefits.
- Closely supervise children using devices.
- Teach children what to do if there is a pop up on the device they are using or if content seems different.
- Regularly discuss concepts of 'being online' and 'using the internet' with children so they continue to develop their understanding.
- Collaboratively establish safe rules when using devices, such as:
 - o I will ask before I use a device.
 - o I will follow our rules when I use technology.
 - o I will take turns and use kind words when I use a device.
 - o I will ask before I take a photo of anyone.
 - o I will tell my teacher if I see something that makes me feel sad when I use a device.

(You can use the safety online safety agreement for guidance <https://www.esafety.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-09/Online-safety-agreement-early-years.pdf?v=1751345506070>)

- Use resources to alert children to online safety such as the e-commissioner's "swoosh and glide picture book and song" <https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/early-years-program>
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in digital play through communicating, creating and consuming digital content in a safe and age-appropriate way.
- Be alert to potential signs of exposure to inappropriate material or online harm (e.g. changes in behaviour, secrecy).
- Model respectful and safe online behaviour, including not oversharing, and asking before taking photo and who it may be shown to.
- Use culturally safe online games, apps, songs, music, and videos that include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives for all children.

- Teach children what is appropriate to take photos of, ask for permission and to never take photos of others when not dressed or upset.
- Check the risks of smart toys and, where possible, disconnect them from the internet to avoid hacking.
- Turn off chat functions on apps and games.
- Choose app settings that turn off location sharing and enable privacy controls.

As part of enrolment terms and conditions, families are asked to:

- Fulfil responsibilities under this policy and related legislative requirements.
- Understand that the service must take steps as required under legislative requirements and follow advice from recognised authorities.
- Participate in the review of documents and provide constructive feedback to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Discuss any questions with the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person in charge.
- Understand that children are not permitted to bring personal electronic devices to care, including smart toys.
- Take steps to protect children from online harm – refer to the eSafety Early Years Online Safety for under 5's booklet <https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/children-under-5/online-safety-for-under-5s-booklet>

Information Technology and Social Media

Our service is committed to ensuring that information technology is used for work-related purposes for the benefit of the service, children, families and team members. To ensure that all persons at the service are aware of their responsibilities to maintain confidentiality to the service owners, educators, families and children when using information technology. To ensure the images of children, the business, families and educators are protected from potential risk by adopting and incorporating the recommended National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children.

Information technology for the purpose of this policy includes, but is not limited to:

- Service and personal telephones including mobile phones
- Service and personal cameras and video devices including the memory storage devices
- Service and personal computers including laptops and other tablet devices
- Email and internet sites including social networking sites.

Social media is everywhere. It is a large part of how most people communicate today and can be a valuable tool for sharing knowledge and events at our service. It also may have the potential to damage the reputation of the service or its owners or employees and

may lead to accidental or deliberate breaches of confidentiality. As it is becoming more common that the lines between work and personal lives are blurred or shared, it is important that employees and families are clear on our policy to ensure all parties are protected at all times.

A reference to "Social Media" in this policy includes any method where information or images are shared with others, this may include, but is not limited to;

- ☐ blogs, and blogging sites
- ☐ forums and discussions boards,
- ☐ social networking sites
- ☐ video and photo sharing websites
- ☐ wikis and online collaborations
- ☐ VOD and podcasting
- ☐ instant messaging including SMS, Facebook groups and messaging
- ☐ geo-spatial tagging

Examples include, but are not limited to;

Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, Sharepoint, LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok, ShareChat, WeChat, Vimeo, Snapchat, YouTube, Flickr, Wikipedia, SoundCloud, SMS, Messenger, FourSquare, WhatsApp.

Uploading photos and videos onto social media services and websites can be a great way to share memorable moments with friends and family, or to boost engagement with your community. But there can be risks associated with posting photos and videos of children online.

While an employee's access and use of the above sites outside of their employment is a private matter, issues or situations may arise when the service is mentioned or where it may be possible to link the employees to their place of employment.

It is our preference that educators do not accept or request "friend requests" or follow families at the service. This maintains your confidentiality as well as theirs and keeps a professional relationship. Remember you can't control what other people tag you in or photos posted by other persons which may not portray a positive professional image. We do not wish to have staff put in a situation where a family member, our clients, have access to personal information about our staff either posted by staff or tagged by others. For your own protection we highly recommend you don't accept centre family members into your social media site. Where a previous relationship was already established with a family who joins our service, we understand that they may already be part of your social media circle, please be aware that without intent, your personal posts or profile may be shared with other family members who are friends of this family. We recommend strong security to ensure your profile is not open to the general public or those not "friends" on your site. You may politely decline family requests by advising that it forms part of this policy.

All employees should be aware when befriending and communicating with colleagues and clients of the centre that this could be viewed as a potential conflict of interest.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

What is AI? - Artificial intelligence (AI) is technology that enables computers and machines to simulate human learning, comprehension, problem solving, decision making, creativity and autonomy. Applications and devices equipped with AI can see and identify objects. They can understand and respond to human language. They can learn from new information and experience. They can make detailed recommendations to users and experts.

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology has ushered in a new era of productivity and efficiency in workplaces across the globe. In Australia, businesses are increasingly relying on AI for a range of applications, from automating routine tasks to making complex decisions. However, the integration of AI into the workplace raises several legal issues that employers and employees must navigate. Key legal challenges posed by AI in Australian workplaces:

- Privacy and data protection
- Discrimination and bias
- Employment contracts and workplace policies
- Health and safety
- Intellectual property

Generative AI

Generative AI (Gen AI) is a wide-ranging term that refers to any form of artificial intelligence capable of generating new content, including text, images, video, audio, or code.

Easily accessible examples of Gen AI include ChatGPT (OpenAI), BardAI (Google), MidJourney, and CoPilot (Microsoft). These tools allow individuals to input text and receive AI-generated content. They offer functionalities such as summarising lengthy articles, providing concise answers to questions, or generating code snippets for described functions.

From 1 September 2025, important regulatory changes to keep children safe will also come into effect. The NQF Child Safety Guides can help approved providers and their services prepare for new requirements including having policies and procedures about safe use of digital technologies and online environments under Reg 168.

Leadership and Management Responsibilities, including Approved Providers, Nominated Supervisors and Responsible Persons will:

Use of Information Technology

- Nominated Supervisors should collaborate with Approved Providers to take all reasonable steps to ensure that:
 - o Documents are stored securely and using a platform that ensures documents aren't lost when there is a failure of an individual device. This can be done using regular backups or through a cloud-based platform or server.
 - o Information technology resources are used for purposes related to service delivery or as authorised in writing.
 - o Computers are password protected and turned off at the end of every day, requiring a password for a re-start.
- Turn on automatic software updates to keep protection current.
- Seek approval from the Approved Provider prior to purchasing any hardware or software packages.
- Only download safe, suitable programs and take all steps to ensure that other programs are not accidentally downloaded as part of the install process.
- Maintain security programs and advise the Approved Provider of any security concerns or expiry of security programs.
- Never click on attachments from unknown sources in emails.
- Follow the copyright terms of any software installed.
- Where a device is stolen or unaccounted for all steps must be taken to ascertain the nature of the content and consider remote wiping of content. Notify the Approved Provider immediately.
- Report any damage to equipment to the Approved Provider immediately.
- Ensure software purchased by staff is not installed on service equipment.
- Restrict any service devices leaving the premise as they contain images of children and documents related to the service. Approval for devices to go home with a staff member must be approved by the Approved Provider.
- Monitor educator use of devices at the service to ensure they are not reducing positive interactions with children and active supervision.
- Provide information and/or training to staff and regular volunteers so they are aware how to maintain safe online environments.
- Conduct risk assessments in relation to children's use of technology to ensure safe use including online environments.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- Before approving the use of AI apps for use across the service:
 - o Conduct a risk assessment
 - o Consider privacy and data security as well as protection of Intellectual property
 - o Provide training to ensure the use is appropriate
 - o Ensure it is used in a way that is respectful and considerate of cultural and diverse needs

- Set expectations with the team, for instance, where AI is used for communicating children's learning, development and experiences it must still be authentic and accurate.
- Ensure staff are aware they are not to upload any images of children, confidential information including full names and DOB or recordable data to any AI platform.

Mobile phones and smart devices

- Ensure that educators and other adults, including students and volunteers are not permitted to possess and/or use their mobile phones, tablets or smart watches for any purpose, (calling, texting, email, photos) during paid working hours unless it is an emergency related to the children being cared for.
- Advise staff that in circumstances where there may be a need for educators to be contacted by family or friends at the service in the event of an emergency, they should provide them with the service phone number.
- Ensure that all staff are aware that smart devices worn as a watch must be in flight-mode during operational hours to restrict distractions from notifications, emails, calls and texts.

Digital Images & Videos – National Model Code

The Nominated Supervisor must ensure the following to protect the images of children:

- Ensure that personal electronic devices that can take images or videos [such as tablets, digital cameras, smartwatches, personal laptops, and smart glasses] and personal storage and file transfer media [such as SD cards, USB drives, hard drives and cloud storage] are not in the possession of any person while providing education and care and working directly with children.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that staff never use a personal electronic device to photograph children, record audio or visual images of children, store or transfer images, videos or audio of children for any purpose including to document children's learning.
- Photos and videos must only be taken on service-issued devices, owned by the service and stored securely. Imagery required for student assessment must be approved by the Nominated Supervisor, with parent permission prior to being provided to the student for use in their assessment.
- Ensure staff do not use photos or other electronic media externally without direct permission from families.
- Take reasonable steps to prohibit staff, students and volunteers from having images of children outside of the service.
- Providing information to educators when a child begins of the photo permissions and ensure this is also provided when a child transitions between rooms.
- Ensure all staff, students and volunteers acknowledge the requirements for images and videos upon commencement

- through both the Induction Checklist and signing acknowledgement of the Digital Image Permission Form.
- Ensure there are sufficient service-supplied devices for the meaningful capture of children's learning and development and review how this occurs without interfering with supervision and meaning interactions with children.
- Ensure families are aware that they are unable to use personal devices within the service at any time.
- Where a service-issued electronic device is provided to a staff member and they have access to this outside of work hours, ensure that it is either not used to capture images or that they are downloaded to a secure service-issued storage device or computer and permanently deleted each day prior to the end of shift.
- Monitor storage and deletion of images regularly.

Social Media – service-related use

- Only display or post images of adults with their permission.
- Take all reasonable checks to ensure that images of children and adults are not used without their permission. Keep a register of those who do not provide permission and immediately remove any image that should not have been used.
- Remove any image as requested by a family or staff member immediately.
- Ensure only authorised persons comment on any form of communication on behalf of our service in an official capacity. If authorised to comment the relevant person must:
 - o Ensure they only comment or disclose authorised information
 - o Ensure all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with all relevant policies
 - o Comment only on their area of expertise and as authorised
 - o Ensure that all comments are respectful of the online community they are interacting with online
 - o Ensure they adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws, and service policies
 - o Ensure that any comment, post or shared item that is "liked or shared" must meet all requirements of this policy
 - o Ensure they are aware of family and educator restrictions regarding social media.

Check the photo before posting:

- Consider who might be able to see these photos?
- Is there anyone else in this photo? (Be mindful that some people may not want their image to be published)
- Will this photo offend anyone?

Storing photos and videos

- Only use of devices that are owned by the service to take photos and videos

- Ensure secure storage of photos/videos and delete from the devices within a reasonable time.
- Must ensure you have written consent from the parents/carers of a child before any photos or videos are published on any media including social media sites, websites or newsletters.

Social Media and other technology– personal

- Understand that the comments you make via social media platforms are public and must adhere to the service's strict media protocols.
- Be aware that anything posted on social media sites is your responsibility, and as an organisation we urge responsible use.
- Carefully consider the use of filters and privacy settings to keep your personal and professional lives separated.
- Consider carefully before accepting or requesting to follow families at the service, we ask that you don't include families in your personal social media sites. This maintains your confidentiality as well as theirs and keeps a professional relationship. Remember you can't control what other people tag you into or photos posted by other persons which may not portray a positive professional image.
- Understand that your online presence reflects the service. Be aware that your actions captured via images, posts, or comments can reflect that of our service.
- Not reference or cite service clients, partners, or customers without their express consent. In all cases, do not publish any information regarding the early education and care service.
- Follow the confidentiality agreement signed upon your employment.
- Never use company logos and trademarks without written consent.
- Not use social networking sites or applications during work hours unless authorised to post or visit the service page or other professional pages for research or other purposes directly related to the provision of care at the service.

Ensure personal blogs have clear disclaimers that the views expressed by the author in the blog is the author's alone and do not represent the views of the service. Be clear and write in first person. Make your writing clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the service. Information published on your blog(s) should comply with the company's confidentiality policy and deed. This also applies to comments posted on other blogs, forums, and social networking sites.

Where the social media post refers to the service or persons related to the service

- Be respectful to the company, other employees, families, children, partners and competitors at all times.
- Only disclose and discuss publicly available information.

- Ensure all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with service policies.
- Remember that your choice to “like” or “share” another person's comment is deemed to be condoning and agreeing with that comment and as such must meet the requirements of this policy.
- Take care to not imply that your comments are a representation of the service.
- Always be polite and respectful to all persons you are interacting with.
- Never reveal confidential or commercially sensitive information about the service or other employees, parents, children, volunteers or anyone associated with the service.
- Never post material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, or is otherwise unlawful.
- Do not use your work email address or any organisation logo's or insignia that may give the impression of official support or endorsement of your personal comment.
- Do not use the identity of another employee, contractor, or other member of the service
- Don't imply you are authorised to comment on behalf of the service unless authorised.
- Refrain from making any comment or posting material that might otherwise cause damage to the service's reputation or bring the organisation into disrepute.
- Ensure you don't make any comment or post material that may break trust in you as a professional educator that families place trust in.
- Do not make any comment or post anything that could be misinterpreted by a reasonable person to be negative about the service, educators, families or children.
- Be aware that a comment or post which infers a negative comment about the service, educators, families or children is not permitted.
- Never use Facebook or other social media contacts, email addresses or phone numbers of families or other staff obtained during your employment. This includes both during your employment and outside of your employment. Use of this personal information is unauthorised; it is collected solely for the purpose of education and care and may be a breach of data. Refer to the Privacy Act and the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and Procedure.

Using Social Media Sites and not mentioning the service:

Our service has no interest in what employees do in participating in social media where they do not mention and give no association with the service in their own time and away from work. You are asked to please be aware that:

- Generalised negative comments about your day may be perceived by educators or families poorly and may result in a loss of trust. Please consider carefully your reasons for posting.
- blog comments are permanently accessible. Tracking tools can identify the contents of a website at a particular date, even if the contents are deleted
- management can do a search of the employee's name and this will produce a full list of any blogged comments about the organisation. This means anyone with internet access can find these comments
- a search using an email address or individual name will also produce a full list of comments and other material made from that address or attributed to that individual
- any personal comments, embarrassing photos, that are accessible to management and other prospective employers may be detrimental to your position at the service and any future prospects you may have
- your choice to "like" or "share" another person's comment is deemed to be condoning and agreeing with that comment and as such must meet the requirements of this policy.

Report your initial concerns to the Approved Provider. You can report further if you still have a concern about:

- your personal information being mishandled contact the OAIC <https://www.oaic.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/>
- an Australian child being cyberbullied contact the office of the eSafety Commissioner <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

If you believe this policy has been breached by another person at our organisation you have an obligation under your employment and this policy to respond immediately and notify the Approved Provider.

Educators and Other Team Members will:

- Be proactive in fulfilling the requirements of this service policy and related legislative requirements.
- Seek further guidance where required to fulfil your requirements.
- Report any concerns or non-compliance immediately to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Participate in the review of documents and provide constructive feedback to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.

Use of Information Technology

- Only use information technology resources for purposes related to service delivery or as authorised in writing.
- Never install any personal programs or apps on service devices. Any software must be purchased by and owned by the service to be installed on service property.
- Seek approval from the Nominated Supervisor prior to downloading or installing any software or applications.

- Do not remove any service equipment without written approval from the Approved Provider.
- Protect documents and images by ensuring that:
- All computers must be shut down when the user is finished:
 - o Administration at the end of the last person using
 - o Centre shared laptops after each time an educator is finished for their use.
- All Ipads or mobile devices are turned off at the end of each day by the last person in that learning space.
- Ensure that the use of any information technology device does not interfere with providing supervision and positive communication with children and families.
- Understand that information technology must never be used in a way that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, or is otherwise unlawful. Performance management steps will be taken which may lead to termination. Refer to the Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy and Procedure.
- Minimise use of electronic devices at the service when directly working with children to ensure that time interacting positively with children and active supervision are not compromised. Consider before taking a photo, is it meaningful and relevant and/or capturing learning.
- Be mindful that children like to copy what they see and reduce time behind a screen.
- Use any applications and/or web-based products for the purpose for which they were intended and take reasonable steps to protect data, privacy and intellectual property of the service.
- Where Artificial Intelligence (AI) is used to communicate children's learning, development and experiences ensure it is authentic and accurate.
- Use AI applications to complement your personal observations and comments, being mindful of the audience receiving your communication.

Mobile phones and smart devices

- Educators and other adults working with children are not permitted to have in their possession any personal electronic device that can be used to capture images or video including, but not limited to, mobile phones, personal laptops, tablets, smart glasses or smart watches for any purpose, (calling, texting, email, photos) during paid working hours unless it is an emergency related to the children being cared for or you have written authorisation.
- Ensure that volunteers and students do not use their mobile phones, laptops, tablets, smart glasses or smart watches for any purpose, (calling, texting, email, photos) while they are in learning environments.

- Where there may be a need for educators to be contacted by family or friends at the service in the event of an emergency, they should provide them with the centre phone number.
- Smart devices worn as a watch must be in flight-mode during operational hours to restrict distractions from notifications, emails, calls and texts.

Digital Imagery & Videos – National Model Code

All staff must ensure the following to protect the images of children:

- Never take photographs or videos of the service, children or other adults on personal devices, including, but not limited to; cameras, video recorders, tablets, mobile phones or smart glasses.
- Photos and videos must only be taken on service-issued devices, owned by the service and stored securely with password protection. Imagery required for student assessment must be approved by the Nominated Supervisor, with parent permission prior to being provided to the student for use in their assessment.
- Do not use photos or other electronic media externally without direct permission from the Nominated Supervisor and where applicable families and children.
- Understand that you are prohibited from having images of children outside of the service and are not permitted to share any image, audio or video of children taken at the service or in any activity that relates to the service without written permission from the family of all children in the images.
- Educators, students, volunteers and other adults (excluding parents of the child in the image) are not permitted to take photos of children and download them onto their home computers. Where this has previously been done team members are to delete them immediately.
- Acknowledge the requirements for images and videos in the Digital Image Permission Form, including, but not limited to not having in your possession when working with children any personal electronic device capable of taking images or video recordings.
- Ensure, students, volunteers and other adults working alongside you do not have in their possession any personal electronic device capable of taking images or video recordings, unless you have been advised by your supervisor that written permission has been granted. Monitor the use of these approved devices to ensure they are used only for the authorised purpose and not for taking images or videos.
- Note all of the above also applies to traditional photography methods not just digital.
- Take reasonable steps to destroy or de-identify personal information including images when no longer needed for the purpose it was collected.
- Where a service-issued electronic device is provided to you and you have access to this outside of work hours, ensure that it is

either not used to capture images or that they are downloaded to a secure service-issued storage device or computer and permanently deleted each day prior to the end of shift.

- Understand that these restrictions are also enforced during transportation of children and excursions and that service-issued devices must be used for capturing images of children and personal devices are not permitted unless you have written authorisation.

Social Media – service-related use

- Where you see a comment or post that you are unsure how to respond, or you feel uncomfortable about you must seek guidance from the Nominated Supervisor. Where an educator deems a comment to be inappropriate, they have an obligation under the terms of their employment and this policy to report this to their immediate supervisor immediately.
- Never post any information on social media sites in relation to the service unless you have been authorised to do so. If authorised to comment you must:
 - Only comment or disclose authorised information
 - Ensure all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with all relevant policies
 - Comment only on your area of expertise and as authorised
 - Ensure that all comments are respectful of the online community you are interacting with online
 - Ensure you adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws, and service policies
 - Ensure that any comment, post or shared item that is “liked or shared” meets all requirements of this policy
 - Be aware of family and educator restrictions regarding social media and images.
- Check the photo before posting:
 - Consider who might be able to see these photos?
 - Is there anyone else in this photo? (Be mindful that some people may not want their image to be published)
 - Will this photo offend anyone?
- Storing photos and videos
 - Only use of devices that are owned by the service to take photos and videos
 - Ensure secure storage of photos and videos and delete from the devices within a reasonable time.
- Consent from parents
 - Must ensure you have written consent from the parents/carers of a child before any photos or videos are published on any media including social media sites, websites or newsletters.

Social Media and other technology– personal

- Carefully consider the use of filters and privacy settings to keep your personal and professional lives separated.
- Consider carefully before accepting or requesting “friend requests” or following families at the service, we ask that you don’t include families in your personal social media sites. This maintains your confidentiality as well as theirs and keeps a professional relationship. Remember you can’t control what other people tag you into or photos posted by other persons which may not portray a positive professional image.
- Understand that your online presence reflects the company. Be aware that your actions captured via images, posts, or comments can reflect that of our service.
- Not reference or cite company clients, partners, or customers without their express consent. In all cases, do not publish any information regarding the early education and care service.
- Follow the confidentiality agreement signed upon your employment.
- Never use company logos and trademarks without written consent.
- Not use social networking sites or applications during work hours unless authorised to post or visit the service page or other professional pages for research or other purposes directly related to the provision of care at the service.

Ensure personal blogs have clear disclaimers that the views expressed by the author in the blog is the author's alone and do not represent the views of the service. Be clear and write in first person. Make your writing clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the service. Information published on your blog(s) should comply with the company's confidentiality policy and deed. This also applies to comments posted on other blogs, forums, and social networking sites.

- Be respectful to the company, other employees, families, children, partners and competitors at all times.

Where the social media post refers to the service or persons related to the service

- Be respectful to the company, other employees, families, children, partners and competitors at all times.
- Only disclose and discuss publicly available information.
- Ensure all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with service policies.
- Remember that your choice to “like” or “share” another person's comment is deemed to be condoning and agreeing with that comment and as such must meet the requirements of this policy.
- Take care to not imply that your comments are a representation of the service.
- Always be polite and respectful to all persons you are interacting with.

- Never reveal confidential or commercially sensitive information about the service or other employees, parents, children, volunteers or anyone associated with the service.
- Never post material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, or is otherwise unlawful.
- Do not use your work email address or any organisation logo's or insignia that may give the impression of official support or endorsement of your personal comment.
- Do not use the identity of another employee, contractor, or other member of the service
- Don't imply you are authorised to comment on behalf of the service unless authorised.
- Refrain from making any comment or posting material that might otherwise cause damage to the service's reputation or bring the organisation into disrepute.
- Ensure you don't make any comment or post material that may break trust in you as a professional educator that families place trust in.
- Do not make any comment or post anything that could be misinterpreted by a reasonable person to be negative about the service, educators, families or children.
- Be aware that a comment or post which infers a negative comment about the service, educators, families or children is not permitted.
- Never use Facebook or other social media contacts, email addresses or phone numbers of families or other staff obtained during your employment. This includes both during your employment and outside of your employment. Use of this personal information is unauthorised; it is collected solely for the purpose of education and care and may be a breach of data. Refer to the Privacy Act and the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and Procedure.

As part of enrolment terms and conditions, families are asked to:

- Fulfil responsibilities under this policy and related legislative requirements.
- Understand that the service must take steps as required under legislative requirements and follow advice from recognised authorities.
- Participate in the review of documents and provide constructive feedback to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Discuss any questions with the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person in charge.
- Provide permission upon enrolment for the use of digital images for yourself and your family.
- Understand that you have the right to decline permissions and to request the removal of any images from a website or social media platform regardless of the permission you provided.

- Be mindful that children like to copy what they see and reduce time behind a screen.
- Not use personal devices while within the service.

Tobacco, Alcohol and drug free environments

Our service is committed to providing a healthy environment for children and adults which is free of tobacco, drugs and alcohol and is compliant with legislative requirements.

Under regulation 82 of the National Regulations, the approved provider must ensure that the nominated supervisor, staff members and volunteers at the service are not affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that may impair their capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children at the service.

Regulation 83 of the National Regulations states that staff must not consume alcohol on the premises while the service is providing education and care to children or be affected by alcohol or drugs so as to impair the supervisor's capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children.

Changes to the Education and Care National Regulations commence on 1 September 2025 including that services must be free from the use of vaping substances and vaping devices.

https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-06/InformationSheet_CS4.pdf

Procedures and Responsibilities

Leadership and Management Responsibilities, including Approved Providers, Nominated Supervisors and Responsible Persons will:

- Positively and clearly communicate all aspects of the policy and take a zero-tolerance approach to non-compliance.
- Understand and comply with all aspects of this policy and related legislation and support team members to do the same.
- Lead a culture of reflection and regular review of policies, seeking feedback from educators, families, children and other community agencies and professionals as appropriate.
- Enforce the legislation in relation to no smoking within 5metres of the boundary fence.
- Ensure signage is visible to advise of the no-smoking requirements and the four metre buffer zone.
- Source current information obtained from recognised health authorities about the risks associated with both passive and non-passive smoking to have available for families, educators and visitors to the service.
- Provide resources when support families or educators in quitting smoking.
- Consider the placement of educators who do smoke, taking a risk management approach which may include relocation of

staff from working with children under 2yrs based on the Red Nose recommendations.

- Where smoke residue/odour is present on children's clothes, bags, bedding or belongings, the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person in day-to-day charge should respectfully notify the family and request that they provide alternative items for care and support them in achieving no residue on these items. Spare clothing or bedding should be provided for use until new items are provided.
- Ensure that alcohol is not consumed on the premises while education and care is being provided to children and that all staff abide by the requirements in the Fit for Work Policy and Procedure.
- Understand that smoking restrictions extend to all smoking products and can include tobacco products, herbal cigarettes, loose smoking blend, personal vaporisers (such as electronic or e-cigarettes, e-cigars, vape pens) and personal vaporiser related products (e-liquids and e-cigarette parts).
- Educate staff to ensure that they are aware that smoking products including vaping devices and vaping substances must not be used on the premises or within 4m of a pedestrian entry or exit.
- Enforce the non-smoking laws, including the use of electronic and vaping substances and devices.

Educators and Other Team Members will:

- Be proactive in fulfilling the requirements of this service policy and related legislative requirements.
- Seek further guidance where required to fulfil your requirements.
- Report any concerns or non-compliance immediately to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Participate in the review of documents and provide constructive feedback to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Where an employee chooses to smoke, they:
 - o are not permitted to smoke within working hours and paid breaks.
 - o must ensure that children and families are not able to observe them smoking on their unpaid lunch break.
 - o should wear clothing over the top of their uniform to prevent smoke permeating clothing or change clothing.
 - o must thoroughly wash hands with soap and water when entering the service and take all steps to ensure that children are not exposed to fumes on clothing, hair, skin or through exhaled air.
 - o must dispose of butts responsibly and not within the service grounds or building
- Understand that they may be restricted to working with children under 2yrs of age due to the increased risks associated with smoking.

- Immediately advise the Nominated Supervisor where a child's clothing, bag, bedding or belongings smell of cigarette smoke to seek support.
- Respectfully provide spare clothing or bedding where there is a strong odour of cigarette smoke.
- Not consume alcohol on the premises while education and care is being provided to children.
- Understand that smoking restrictions extend to all smoking products and can include tobacco products, herbal cigarettes, loose smoking blend, personal vaporisers (such as electronic or e-cigarettes, e-cigars, vape pens) and personal vaporiser related products (e-liquids and e-cigarette parts).
- Comply with the regulations requirements and ensure that vaping substances and devices are not used on the premises or within 4m of a pedestrian entry or exit.

Families are asked to:

- Fulfil responsibilities under this policy and related legislative requirements.
- Understand that the service must take steps as required under legislative requirements and follow advice from recognised authorities.
- Participate in the review of documents and provide constructive feedback to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Discuss any questions with the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person in charge.
- Be informed of the risk of smoking and passive smoke with young children.
- Ensure children's clothing, bags, bedding and belongings are smoke free.
- Abide by the legislative requirement to not smoke within 4metres of the building or playground.
- Understand that smoking restrictions extend to all smoking products and can include tobacco products, herbal cigarettes, loose smoking blend, personal vaporisers (such as electronic or e-cigarettes, e-cigars, vape pens) and personal vaporiser related products (e-liquids and e-cigarette parts).
- Comply with the regulations requirements and ensure that vaping substances and devices are not used on the premises or within 4m of a pedestrian entry or exit.

Other Members of Community are asked to:

- Abide by the legislative requirement to not smoke within 4metres of the building or playground.
- Comply with the regulations requirements and ensure that vaping substances and devices are not used on the premises or within 4m of a pedestrian entry or exit.

Legislation, Recognised Authorities and Sources

- Providing a Child Safe Environment NQF Review Policy and Procedure Guidelines, ACECQA (accessed on-line Feb 2025)
https://www.cecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/PolicyGuidelines_ProvidingAChildSafeEnvironment_2.pdf
- Timber in Playspaces Kidsafe June 2021 (accessed online Feb 2025)
<https://www.kidsafensw.org/imagesDB/documents/TimberinPlayspaces2021.pdf>
- Impact Areas Kidsafe June 2021 (accessed on-line Feb 2025)
<https://www.kidsafensw.org/imagesDB/documents/ImpactAreas2021.pdf>
- Moveable Play Equipment- A guide for playground owners and educators V1.2 2021 Kidsafe (accessed on-line Feb 2025)
https://www.kidsafensw.org/imagesDB/documents/2021_FINAL_MoveablePlayEquipmentpdf.pdf
- "Playground Surfacing" Kidsafe June 2021 (accessed on-line Feb 2025)
<https://www.kidsafensw.org/imagesDB/documents/PlaygroundSurfacing2021.pdf>
- Hot day, safe play Queensland Government, Early Childhood Education and Care (accessed on-line Feb 2025)
<https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/sector-news-and-resources/news-for-educators-and-service-providers/hot-day-safe-play>
- Portable Mats Kidsafe June 2020 (accessed on-line Feb 2025)
https://www.kidsafensw.org/imagesDB/documents/PortableMats2020_1.pdf
- Health Safety and Wellbeing Angela Owen – extract from NQSPLP e-newsletter No. 29 2012, Early Childhood Australia
- Childcare – Supervision in the Playground Guild Insurance Sept 2012
- Guide to the National Quality Framework Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority Jan 2025
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (version Oct 2024)
 - o 167 Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
- Education and Care Services National Regulations (version Jan 2025)
 - o 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures
 - o 170 Policies and procedures to be followed
 - o 171 Policies and procedures to be kept available
 - o 172 Notification of change in policies or procedures affecting ability of family to utilise service
- National Quality Standards
 - o QA1 Educational program and practice
 - o QA2 Children's health and safety.
 - o QA3 Physical environment
 - o 7.1.2 Management systems

Developed: 2 October 2012
Reviewed: July 2015 by M Duffy-Fagan, S. Kearsey
October 2017 by M Duffy-Fagan, K Pomfrett
September 2018 M Duffy-Fagan, K Pomfrett
March 2023 K Hewat and A McEntyre
July 2025 M Duffy-Fagan, K Hewat, P Guy and staff

I _____ have been provided with this policy and the opportunity to ask questions. I have read and understand my responsibilities under this policy and procedure. I will ensure I ask questions if I am unsure. I also understand the importance of supporting other educators and families in fulfilling their responsibilities. I will seek support from my supervisor if needed to comply.

Signed: _____ Date: _____