

SUPERVISION POLICY

PURPOSE

Our service is committed to protecting children in our care. We acknowledge supervision as the key to achieving this. This policy is designed to provide clear guidelines to ensure effective supervision at all times.

This policy is designed to promote a consistent approach to the effective supervision of children by:

- Setting out the responsibilities of staff and Directors.
- Outlining the importance of the need for children's services to provide safe and secure environments for children that are supervised effectively.
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and expectations when supervising children at the centre.

BACKGROUND AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In a centre-based service, children of different ages and abilities will need different levels of supervision. Generally, the younger children are, the more they need an adult to be close by to support and assist them. For young children, adequate supervision may involve children remaining in close proximity to the adult who is supervising them. Supervision of infants and toddlers who are sleeping will need to be carefully considered to ensure educators can see and hear children. With preschool age children, the program may involve simultaneous use of indoor and outdoor environments. It is important that educators effectively supervise children in both of these environments.

It is understood that there is a shared legal responsibility, accountability and commitment by staff and Directors to implement the service's Supervision Policy, procedures and practices.

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre complies with Education and Care Services National Regulations, Elder Street ECHC Code of Ethics, Workplace Health and Safety, National Quality Standards and best practice recommendations from recognised authorities.

National Law:

- Section 165: Offence to inadequately supervise children.
- Section 167: Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

National Regulations:

- Regulation 101 (2)(f): Supervision during excursions.
- Regulation 115: Premises designed to facilitate supervision.
- Regulation 168(2)(h): Policies and procedures are required in relation to providing a child safe environment.

National Quality Standard

- Quality Area 2 – Children's Health and Safety
- 2.2.1 Adequate Supervision – At all time, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

The approved provider, nominated supervisor and educators must ensure all children being educated and cared for by the service are adequately supervised at all times including during excursions and on transportation provided or arranged by the service.

Educator-to-child ratios alone do not achieve adequate supervision. Supervision is critical to the safety of children and helps to protect children from harm or hazards that may arise in their play and daily routines.

Adequate supervision means:

- that an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation.
- knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently.

Educators should balance supervision and engagement by drawing on a range of skills such as positioning, using peripheral vision and monitoring changes in noise and stress levels. Children of different ages and abilities need different levels of supervision.

Examples of adequate supervision of children in a centre-based service include:

- birth to three – educators can see and hear the children at all times, especially if sleeping.
- young children – educators remain in close proximity to the children.
- preschool age children – educators actively supervise indoor and outdoor environments.
- over preschool age children – educators know where each child is and in a position to respond if necessary.

Factors affecting adequate supervision:

- number, ages and abilities of children,
- number and positioning of educators,
- each child's current activity, including those who are sleeping or resting,
- areas where children are playing, in particular, the visibility and accessibility,
- risks in the environment and experiences provided to children, including excursions or on transportation provided or arranged by the service,
- the educators' knowledge of each child and each group of children
- the experience, knowledge and skill of each educator."

Children need safe and secure environments to thrive in their life and learning. Effective supervision is integral to creating environments that are safe and responsive to the needs of all children. It also helps to protect children from hazards or harm that may arise from their play and daily routines. Effective supervision also allows educators to engage in meaningful interactions with children.

Approaches to supervision

To effectively supervise groups of children, educators need to conduct risk assessments and make professional judgements to determine an approach to supervision. Consider the environment, the children, and the context of the activities children participate in.

Risk assessments allow educators to determine the level of supervision that is required for particular situations. For example, an educator may recognise that a particular activity that involves some risk, such as carpentry, requires close supervision. Alternatively, if children are participating in low risk activities, the educator can focus their attention on engaging with children.

When adopting an approach to supervision, it is also important to consider how children's agency is promoted. The decisions educators make about how they supervise children can provide opportunities for children to participate in genuine decision-making. For example, when an educator adopts an approach to supervision allowing a child to engage in independent exploration and appropriate risk taking, they provide opportunities for the child to make responsible and genuine decisions about their play.

Effective supervision

Effective supervision reduces the risk of harm to children by preventing injuries and accidents. It also promotes positive, responsive, and intentional learning environments for children and staff. Effective supervision is the act of watching, listening and teaching children in a protected environment to ensure they are safe and engaged in learning about the world in which they live.

Supervision strategies

Active Supervision – direct and constant monitoring by staff in close proximity to children for supervising activities that involve some risk, for example cooking experiences or play in or near water

Positioning – careful positioning of staff to allow them to observe the maximum area possible. By moving around the area staff can then ensure the best view possible, and that they are always facing the children

Scanning – regularly looking around the area to observe all the children in the vicinity is utilised when staff are supervising a large group of children.

Listening – keeping an ear out for children near and far will help to supervise areas that may not be in the staff's direct line of sight. This is particularly useful when listening out for sleeping babies through a monitor or when supervising areas where children may be playing in corners or behind or under play equipment.

Observing – the skill of observation is used throughout the entire day, and this is a very useful tool when supervising children. Being able to anticipate what may happen next allows staff to assist children as difficulties arise and to intervene when there is potential danger to children.

Balance of activities – this helps to ensure that the risk is minimised and there are sufficient staff to attend to children's needs.

Educators need to communicate and collaborate with one another to ensure children are supervised effectively. This is necessary to ensure educators know where their colleagues are in the service and how this may affect the supervision of children. Additionally, it enables roles and responsibilities to be clearly understood. For example, educators should let their colleagues know if they are leaving an area for any reason, such as to get a resource from another room, or to go to the bathroom. Educators may also need to communicate details about individual children. For example, an infant who has had difficulty eating solid foods due to a cold may need to be monitored more closely when they are eating food.

Active Supervision in 6 steps

1. Set up the Environment
2. Position Educators
3. Scan and Count
4. Listen
5. Anticipate Behaviour
6. Engage and Redirect

Educators also need to make sure the service environment is safe and consider how adequate and active supervision supports a child safe environment, including: where equipment is placed, play spaces in secluded areas or rest rooms with limited ease of view, window coverings (including with children's artwork) and supervising online activities.

The design and layout of the service's environment and supervision practices of educators help with keeping children safe. Organising activities, trips, and schedules carefully can support effective supervision. For example:

- actively engaging with children's play
- minimising situations where educators are alone with children
- knowing when certain children will require additional support for particular activities
- making sure windows aren't covered, to avoid blind spots
- closely watching interactions in playhouses and bathrooms.

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 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.
- Ensure ratios as per the Education and Care Services National Regulation are maintained at all times as the minimum level of staffing.
- Develop rosters to ensure that educators under 18yrs of age are able to be supervised at all times by an educator who is at least 18yrs.
- Ensure students and volunteers are never left alone with children and are always supervised by an educator who is at least 18yrs.
- Work collaboratively with educators and families to develop and implement additional strategies where a child has an identified behaviour that requires modification to supervision.
- Monitor supervision practices throughout the day and provide guidance as required.
- Monitor roll calls and head counts throughout the day, particularly at transition times.
- Provide information and/or training to ensure educators are aware of their responsibilities in relation to active supervision.
- Ensure supervision is covered at induction for all staff, students, volunteers and casual and agency personnel. This should include the ACECQA information sheet and an explanation of environmental factors, boundary security and children with known behaviours which are relevant.
- Respectfully share information on children who have known behaviours that may risk supervision, such as a tendency to hide, climb fences or try to leave the premises or learning space. Educators are to conduct risk assessments on children who are known for exhibiting behaviours that may pose a risk to supervision and document changes to the environment to mitigate these risks.

- Include information on supervision and a reflection on practice at least annually with all team members.
- Encourage and lead reflection on supervision on a regular basis.
- Display posters to remind educators about active supervision, including, but not limited to:
 - o "Active Supervision in 6 Steps" ACECQA Poster
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-09/Active-Supervision-6-steps.pdf>
 - o "Factors to consider when planning for adequate supervision" ACECQA Poster
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-08/RAMT-AdequateSupervision.pdf>
- Provide training and resources to support educator knowledge and understanding of adequate supervision, including but not limited to;
 - o ACECQA information sheet
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-11/V7%20QA2-ActiveSupervisionEnsuringSafetyAndPromotingLearning.pdf>
 - o Adequate Supervision video, Queensland Department of Education
<https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/sector-news-and-resources/news-for-educators-and-service-providers/get-your-supervision-active>
 - o Incident Prevention video, Queensland Department of Education
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QcTmMLICG1s>

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.
- Participate in training and seek information on actively supervising.
- Position themselves in such a way as to increase their ability to provide adequate supervision to all areas including around play equipment, into secluded areas like playhouses and in bathrooms.
- Ensure educators under 18yrs of age are supervised at all times by an educator who is at least 18yrs.
- Ensure students and volunteers are never left alone with children and are always supervised by an educator who is at least 18yrs.
- Ensure that environments, furniture and experiences are arranged to ensure effective supervision.

- Be responsible for supporting other educators in achieving supervision including providing guidance for new educators by sharing knowledge of children and supervision practices.
- Communicate about supervision with colleagues to ensure that there are no areas being accessed by children who are unsupervised.
- Ensure routines allow for supervision of individuals and small groups of children, such as children who take longer to eat or sleep and during indoor/outdoor play.
- Be involved in children's play experiences in order to extend learning as well as for monitoring children's safety.
- Position themselves carefully throughout the relevant environment so that consistent supervision and interaction can be maintained for all areas.
- Be alert, aware and ready to assist children in potentially unsafe situations. The key to preventing accidents is constant, active supervision so that you can anticipate events.
- Never leave a learning space for any reason without communicating with other educators and checking that the absence will not compromise effective supervision. Communicate with each other prior to leaving a group.
- Ensure that supervision is not compromised during nappy change and when assisting with toileting. All educators must make arrangements to ensure that the remaining children in the group are able to be supervised by themselves or another educator.
- Be prepared and ensure that all required equipment is available and within reach prior to beginning the nappy change ritual.
- Ensure that a child is never left alone on the nappy change table and that physical contact is always maintained with the child.
- Be prepared and ensure that you have what is needed for the day's learning experiences to reduce the need to briefly leave the learning space.
- Effectively supervise children who are sleeping by ensuring they are always within sight and hearing distance so that educators can assess the child's breathing and colour of their skin to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Rooms that are very dark and have music playing may not provide adequate supervision of sleeping children. It is the responsibility of educators to ensure that these spaces are able to be supervised appropriately.
- Ensure supervision windows remain clear and not painted over or covered with curtains or posters. Baby monitors or other devices should be used where appropriate to maintain auditory supervision, especially when babies/children are in separate sleep rooms. Refer to the Sleep and Rest Policy.
- Closely supervise children who are eating to prevent choking and sharing of foods which may also lead to an allergic reaction.
- Provide close supervision where children are interacting with animals. Refer to the Health and Hygiene Policy.
- Conduct checks at the end of the day to ensure all children are collected and marked off the attendance register.

- Not engage in activities that compromise the supervision of children at any time, this includes the use of personal mobile phones, smart watches and other devices when working with children.
- Get to know children and understand their abilities, interests, and challenges. Participate in children's play and observe behaviour to reduce the likelihood of injury or harm as far as reasonably practicable by being available to intervene when there is a potential for harm.
- Provide closer supervision to children for activities that involve some risk, for example woodwork activities, interacting with animals, cooking experiences, water play, mealtimes, sleep times, toileting and climbing equipment.
- Conduct a risk assessment and collaboratively develop and implement additional strategies where a child has an identified behaviour that requires modification to supervision. Specific supervision requirements may need to be set for individual children, groups of children or related to specific times of day or activities provided.
- Take a risk management approach to supervision, conducting a risk assessment for specific activities will help in identifying if additional supervision requirements need to be implemented, for example a cooking activity or use of a carpenter's bench.
- Consider the following factors when planning for adequate supervision and conducting risk assessments:
 - o Visibility and accessibility of areas when planning for adequate supervision.
 - o Number of children and their ages and abilities.
 - o Hazards and risks in the environment being used.
 - o Educator's knowledge of each child as well as educator's experience.
 - o Number of educators available to actively supervise, considering other responsibilities at the time.
 - o The ability for an educator to respond to an incident without putting other children at risk.
- Regularly reflect on supervision, as individuals, in small groups and as an entire team to ensure that strategies are implemented to continually improve on strategies.
- Specific supervision requirements may need to be set for individual children, groups of children or related to specific times of day or activities provided.
- Consider children's agency and how to ensure safety when children are engaging appropriate risk taking.
- Regularly check fences and gates to ensure these are secure. Monitor the layout and set up of environments and ensure climbing items, furniture and other climbable items are not placed within 1m of a fence or other item that could be used to transition across to a fence.
- Identify and monitor known blind spots in the environment and boundary security.

- Respectfully share information on children's who have known behaviours that may risk supervision, such as a tendency to hide, climb fences or try to leave the premises or learning space. Ensure a risk minimisation plan is in place and distributed to all staff where there is a child with identified behaviours that may put their safety at risk.

When transitioning between learning spaces or indoor/outdoor environments:

- Always conduct a head count prior to going outdoors and prior to coming in from outdoors. A head count should look like this:
 - o Count the number of children in care and share this information with the other educators in your room or sharing the outdoor space with you.
 - o Do a head count, identifying face to face.
- **Before going outside – do a group time, talk about:**
 - o Safety rules outside,
 - o Sun protection and the UV index,
 - o Being kind to our friends and our plants,
 - o Do a head count.
- **When you come in from outside:**
 - o Count as children walk in to wash their hands. Group children on mat to ensure all children are present and accounted for before moving to the next experience.

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 educators with information about your child which may need to be considered with supervision.

Students and volunteers are asked to:

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that they are never left alone with children, communicating with educators about this requirement.
- Actively supervise children including monitoring environments, known blind spots in the environment and boundary security.

Legislation, Recognised Authorities and Sources

- “Active Supervision: Ensuring Safety and Promoting Learning” ACECQA Quality Area 2 Factsheet, Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority Feb 2018 (accessed on-

line June 2025)

https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-04/QA2-ActiveSupervisionEnsuringSafetyAndPromotingLearning_1.pdf

- “Active Supervision in 6 Steps” ACECQA Poster (accessed on-line June 2025) <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-09/Active-Supervision-6-steps.pdf>
- “Factors to consider when planning for adequate supervision” ACECQA Poster (accessed on-line June 2025) <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-08/RAMT-AdequateSupervision.pdf>
- Adequate Supervision video, Queensland Department of Education <https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/sector-news-and-resources/news-for-educators-and-service-providers/get-your-supervision-active>
- Incident Prevention video, Queensland Department of Education <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QcTmMLICG1s>
- “Supervision” National Quality Framework Supervision Fact Sheet Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, State Government Victoria October 2017 (accessed on-line June 2025) <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/supervision.aspx>
- ACECQA – NQF Child Safe Culture Guide (accessed on-line June 2025) [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-06/NQF Child Safe Culture Guide Final.pdf](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-06/NQF%20Child%20Safe%20Culture%20Guide%20Final.pdf)
- “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 165 Offence to inadequately supervise children
 - o 167 Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
- Education and Care Services National Regulations (version Jan 2025)
 - o 115 Premises designed to facilitate supervision
 - 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 QA2 Children's health and safety

Supporting Documents & Policies

Medical Conditions
Interactions with Children
Nappy Change
Excursion
Child Safe Policy
Toileting and Nappy Change
Emergencies and Evacuation
Water Safety
Sleep and Rest
Providing a Child Safe Environment

Review

The policy and guidelines will be reviewed every two years and incorporate comments and suggestions from our range of stakeholders (including team members, children and families).

Developed: 1 June 2006 by M Duffy-Fagan
Reviewed: 9 December 2008 by all staff and M Duffy-Fagan
Reviewed: September 2010 by M Duffy-Fagan and staff
Reviewed: March 2013 – M Duffy-Fagan and staff
Reviewed: May 2017 – K Pomfrett and M Duffy-Fagan
Reviewed: October 2018 – M Duffy-Fagan
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: _____