

Coffs Coast Contact Services

Child-Focused Supervised Contact Service

POLICY STATEMENT

Responsibility for the Safety of Children During Supervised Visitation

Purpose

To clearly define the duty of care and shared responsibilities for ensuring the physical, emotional, and psychological safety of children attending supervised visitation facilitated by the Service.

Policy

Coffs Coast Contact Services holds the **primary duty of care** for the child for the full duration of any supervised visitation or changeover conducted under its authority. This responsibility commences when the child is formally received by staff and concludes when the child is safely returned to the authorised parent or carer.

Supervision is a structured safety intervention. While parental responsibility remains with the parents under law, the management of risk during the supervised period is assumed by the Service.

Principles

- The child's best interests are paramount.
- Safety takes precedence over parental expectations or convenience.
- Supervisors remain neutral while actively managing risk.
- Visits may be modified, redirected, or terminated where safety concerns arise.
- Supervision is continuous and observational; it is not a passive role.

Responsibilities of the Service

- Provide a safe, child-focused environment.
- Maintain appropriate supervision at all times.
- Conduct risk assessment and implement safety strategies.
- Intervene where interactions are unsafe or distressing.
- Ensure staff are appropriately trained.
- Document visits objectively and accurately.

Supervising Staff

- Exercise professional judgment to safeguard the child.
- Enforce Service rules, Court Orders, and safety plans.
- Act immediately on any identified risk.

The Visiting Parent

- Retains parental responsibility but must comply with staff directions.
- Must behave in a child-focused and respectful manner.

Authority to Act

The Service has authority to direct behaviour, interrupt interactions, adjust visits, or end a session where safety cannot be maintained.

Key Statement

Supervised visitation represents a temporary and defined transfer of responsibility for **risk management and environmental safety** from the parents to the professional Service for the duration of the session.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if legislation or operational practice changes.

Approved By: _____

Date: _____

Review Date: _____