

Early Learning

Supervision of Children Policy

Overarching Statement

The *Keeping Children Safe Policy* of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania (refer to *Sources*) is the overarching whole of church policy to be implemented by individuals and entities involved with or connected to the Uniting Church. All children who are involved in any of the Church's activities, events or programs have a right to feel and be safe. The Church is committed to provide safe environments where children are cared for, respected, nurtured and sustained.

Policy Statement

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- providing adequate supervision of all enrolled children in all aspects of the service's program;
- ensuring all children are directly and actively supervised by educators employed or engaged by the service;
- maintaining a duty of care to all children;
- ensuring there is an understanding of the shared legal responsibility and accountability between, and a commitment by, all persons to implement the procedures and practices outlined in this policy.

Executive Summary

Supervision is critical in ensuring that children's safety is protected in the service environment. All children must be adequately supervised at all times and in keeping with duty of care responsibilities. As a minimum requirement, the legislated educator-to-child ratios must be complied with at all times. With the exception of Family Day Care and single staff, Out of School Care settings, a minimum of two educators are to be rostered on duty at all times children are in attendance at the service.

Supervision strategies should be implemented to suit the service environment; educator knowledge and skills; the age mix, dynamics and size of the group of children being supervised, as well as the activities being undertaken. A risk management process should be used to identify high-risk activities, potential risks during excursions, water-related hazards, etc., and strategies implemented to minimize hazards and ensure children's safety at all times. Supervision procedures are to be evaluated regularly.

Adequate, effective and active supervision requires educators to make ongoing assessments of the child and the activities in which they are engaged. In centre-based settings, this requires teamwork and good communication between educators.

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Current Environmental Context

Educator-to-child ratios do not determine what is considered adequate supervision. Adequate supervision means that an educator can respond and intervene immediately, including when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation. This includes while sleeping (refer to *Relaxation and Sleep policy and Sleep Room Record*).

Every child is to be monitored actively and diligently. This means knowing where children are at all times. Active supervision requires focussed attention, intentional observation and physical positioning of educators combined with knowledge of individual children's development and abilities.

Effective supervision also requires educators to be actively involved with children, planning thoughtfully and making decisions throughout the day to enable appropriate supervision strategies.

A flexible approach that considers context and contingency is essential, particularly at end-of-day procedures, excursions and regular outings, transporting children, nappy change and sleep routines.

Attachment 11a - Responsibilities relating to the Supervision of Children Policy

Attachment 11b - Educator supervision behaviours

Reference/Sources

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Keeping Children Safe Policy of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, Approved June 2015:

<https://www.victas.uca.org.au/UCA%20Resources/Documents/Keeping%20Children%20Safe%20Policy.pdf>

- *Child Safe Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Excursions Regular Outings and Service Events Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Relaxation and Sleep Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*
- Children's Services Act 1996: S26, 27, 29A
- Children's Services Regulations 2009: r 50, 51, 53-56
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 165, 167, 169, 174
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 101, 122, 123, 126, 168, 176, 355, 357, 360

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- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 201. Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority
- Kidsafe: www.kidsafe.com.au
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety
- Occupational *Health and Safety Act 2004*
- The Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne Safety Centre: www.rch.org.au/safetycentre

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Uniting Early Learning on: 11th May 2017

Review

This policy will be reviewed by: 11th June 2018

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Attachment 11a - Responsibilities relating to the Supervision of Children Policy

National Regulations & Act

AP=Approved Provider

NS=Nominated Supervisor

CS=Certified Supervisor

Victorian Regulations & Act

L=Licensee

PN=Primary Nominee

N=Nominee

Action	Approved Provider/ Licensee	NS & PN	CS & N Educators	Parents
Ensure the prescribed educator-to-child ratios are met at all times and that educators have required qualifications	x	x		
Count only those educators who are working directly with children at the service in the educator-to-child ratios	x	x		
With the exception of Family Day Care and single staff services, ensure a minimum of two educators are rostered on duty at all times children are in attendance at the service	x	x		
Ensure that children attending the service are adequately supervised (refer to <i>Glossary</i>) at all times they are in the care of that service	x	x	x	
Consider the design and arrangement of the service environment to support active supervision. This may be supported by a supervision plan (<i>Refer to Attachment 11b</i>)	x	x	x	
Identify high-risk activities, including, through a risk management process, and implement strategies to improve children's safety e.g. increasing adult-to-child ratios above regulatory requirement	x	x		
Ensure supervision standards are maintained during educator breaks, including during lunch breaks	x	x	x	
Provide safe play spaces for children, which allow for adequate supervision, including safe fall zones, good traffic flow, maintenance of buildings and equipment, and minimising trip hazards	x	x	x	
Report to the responsible person where circumstances: do not allow for adequate supervision, require maintenance to the building and/or equipment and provide tripping hazards		x	x	
Provide staff rosters, and casual and relief staff lists	x	x		
Develop and implement procedures to inform casual and relief staff about the supervision strategies outlined in this policy	x	x		
Evaluate supervision procedures regularly in consultation with educators and staff	x	x		
Provide adequate supervision at all times		x	x	
Communicate with and receive acknowledgement from other educators regularly, to ensure adequate supervision at all times		x	x	
Ensure volunteers, students, visitors and support people are not responsible for the supervision of children		x	x	

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Action	Approved Provider/ Licensee	NS & PN	CS & N Educators	Parents
Be alert to, and aware of, risks and hazards and the potential for incidents and injury throughout the service and not just within your own immediate area. Use active and diligent supervision skills to reduce or prevent incident or injury to children and adults		x	x	
Develop procedures to ensure that all children are accounted for, by referring to attendance records at various times throughout the day, and the accurate identification of each child, both before and after outdoor activities		x	X	
Adjust supervision strategies to suit the service environment, educator skills, and age mix, dynamics and size of the group of children being supervised and the activities being undertaken		x	x	
Report to the Approved Provider/Licensee if additional supervision is required and provide rationale		x		
Maintain a duty of care to children at all times (including when the child is on the premises but not signed into or out of the service and the parent or person delivering or collecting the child is responsible for supervising that child)		x	x	
Work as a team to supervise children's daily departure from the service and be aware of the person who has authority to collect the child		x	x	
Inform parents and volunteers at the service about the <i>Supervision of Children Policy</i> and the ways that they can adhere to its procedures		x	x	
Ensure doors and gates are closed at all times to prevent children from leaving the service unaccompanied or from accessing unsupervised/unsafe areas of the service		x	x	
Decide when to interrupt and redirect children's play to ensure safety at all times		x	x	
Identify opportunities to support and extend children's learning while also recognising their need to play without adult intervention		x	x	
Conduct and record daily safety checks of the environment to assess safety and to remove hazards		x	x	
Arrange the environment (equipment, furniture and experiences) to ensure effective supervision while also allowing children to access quiet/private spaces		x	x	
Provide direct and constant supervision when a child is near water		x	x	
Conduct a risk assessment prior to an excursion, regular event and service event to identify risks to health, safety or wellbeing, and specify how these risks will be managed and minimised		x	x	
Follow the incident reporting and escalation process (refer to the <i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy</i>) and notify the Nominated Supervisor/Primary Nominee or Approved Provider/Licensee in the event of a serious incident or notifiable complaint (refer to <i>Glossary</i>). Examples include when a child appears to be missing or is unaccounted for, or a complaint has been made alleging the health, safety or wellbeing of a child has been compromised		x	x	

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Action	Approved Provider/ Licensee	NS & PN	CS & N Educators	Parents
Assist the Approved Provider/Licensee and the Nominated Supervisor/Primary Nominee to evaluate supervision practices regularly			x	
Ensure educators are aware that your child has arrived at or is leaving the service				x
Ensure that doors and gates, including playground gates, are closed after entry or exit				x
Be aware of the movement of other children near gates and doors when entering or exiting the service				x
Enable educators to supervise children at all times by making arrangements to speak with them outside program hours				x
Parents to supervise own children before signing them into the program and after having signed them out				x
Parents to supervise other children in their care, including siblings, while attending or assisting at the service				x

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Attachment 11b – Educator supervision behaviours

It is expected that educators will:

- Partner and communicate with team members to ensure constant supervision
- Actively engage with children
- Be physically present and position themselves to maximise visual supervision
- Be in a position to respond to individual needs in a timely manner
- Maintain an awareness of activity levels and changes to these
- Listen and respond to increased noise levels
- Align program decision making regarding activities and experiences, to supervision requirements
- Use communication skills and verbal responses to supervision issues and intervene where necessary
- Regularly scan and visually monitor play spaces
- Anticipate likely hazards
- Not using personal mobile phones while working with children
- Avoid carrying out activities that may draw their attention away from active supervision, e.g. cleaning, reading and limiting use of service phone to urgent calls and messages, and agreeing to call people back at an appropriate time.

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