

# CHILD-SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

## NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

<b>QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.
2.2.3	Child protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.
<b>QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN</b>		
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.

<b>EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS</b>	
S162 (A)	Persons in day-to-day charge and nominated supervisors to have child protection training
S165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
S167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
83	Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
84	Awareness of child protection law
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
99	Children leaving the education and care Service premises
102(A-D)	Transportation of children (risk assessments and authorisations)
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
104	Fencing
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities

109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
123	Educator to child ratios- centre based Services
136	First aid qualifications
145	Staff record
149	Volunteers and students
155	Interactions with children
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
165	Record of visitors
166	Children not to be alone with visitors
167	Record of Service's compliance
168 (h)	Education and care Services must have policies- Providing a child safe environment
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

### RELATED LEGISLATION

Children & Young People (Safety) Act 2017	Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016
<a href="#"><u>Statutes Amendment (Child Sexual Abuse) Act 2021</u></a>	

### PURPOSE

Our Service has a legal and ethical responsibility to provide a safe and friendly environment where all children are respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. Children's safety and wellbeing is paramount, and we aim to take all practical steps to protect children and young people from harm or risk of harm, ensuring a healthy and safe environment. Our Service provides children and staff with an environment free from the use of tobacco, alcohol, E- Cigarettes and illicit drugs.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations the approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for providing a child safe environment and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed. (Regulation 168, Regulation 170). The National Law requires management to ensure all children being educated and cared for are adequately supervised and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and wellbeing from any hazard likely to cause injury. Our focus is to build a child safe environment which is reflected in our Service policies, procedures; understood and practiced by all children, young people, families, educators, staff, visitors, volunteers and students.

## **COMMUNICATION**

We aim to build and maintain positive and respectful relationships with children, families, staff and educators of our Service and prioritise a child safe environment. We communicate regularly and clearly with all stakeholders and ensure our policies and procedures are available to staff, educators, students, employees, volunteers, families, children and young people. We welcome and encourage all stakeholders to share feedback and evaluate our policies and procedures through surveys, feedback or discussions with management.

## **PARTICIPATION OF FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Our Service ensures families are always welcome and feel comfortable asking questions on how we prioritise child safety. We provide a range of opportunities for consultation and collaboration about decisions regarding their child's safety whilst at our Service.

We promote a respectful, child-safe culture where children and young people concerns are always responded to, and children and young people feel empowered to participate in decisions and provide feedback to staff and educators. Our Service provides opportunities for conversations with children and young people about their rights and encourages them to speak up if they are feeling unsafe or worried. We provide multiple channels for families, children and young people to lodge complaints, tailoring these options to their communication preferences based on their feedback. We work individually with families, children and young people about the type of support they may require to participate in the complaint's procedure.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

We will:

- Promote a culture of child safety and wellbeing in all aspects of our Service's operations
- Adhere to our *Child Safe Environment Policy*, *Child Protection Policy* at all times
- Ensure all staff, educators, volunteers and students have undertaken current child protection legislation training
- Provide adequate and effective supervision of children at all times
- Ensure the safe use of online environments
- Take reasonable action to protect children and young people from harm and risk of harm
- Ensure the Service premise is free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol
- Be responsible for their own, and others health and safety
- Be a positive role model to children and young people
- Respect children and young people's privacy and dignity at all times
- Listen and respond appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people
- Report any allegations of harm or risk of harm to a child to CARL as mandatory reporter and make an internal report after you have reported to CARL
- Notify the approved provider and/or the regulatory authority within 24 hours of any serious incident or complaint as per the national regulations
- Encourage children and young people to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them.

Staff, educators, students and volunteers must:

- Not discriminate against any child or young person, because of age, gender, cultural background, race, ethnicity or disability
- Not put children or a young person at risk of harm - refusing food/play, making threats, exposing children to inappropriate language or material (movies, internet, photos)
- Not develop any 'special' relationships with children or young people that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment
- Not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while working; bring alcohol or drugs onto the premises
- Not smoke or vape / E-cigarettes within the vicinity of the Service.

## RECRUITMENT

Our Service maintains a rigorous and consistent recruitment, screening and selection process to ensure the best staff members and educators are employed based on skills, qualifications, experience and suitability for the position available

All staff must have current certificates of the following:

- First Aid (HLTAID012) + CPR training
- RHAN
- WWCC
- Police Check
- Protective Practices Training
- Diabetes Cert I & II Training
- Sexual Behaviour in Children & Young People Training
- Food Handling Training

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

East Adelaide School OSHC endeavours to ensure the physical environment is safe by:

- Effective / Active Supervision
- Maintaining child – educator ratios at all times
- Removing and reporting hazards (where possible)
- Educators always maintain a clear line of sight with all children
- Conducting risk assessments prior to each session
- Collaborating with families and children to develop behaviour guidelines
- Educators understanding their role
- Children are encouraged to speak up about their safety and the safety of others by telling an educator if they feel unsafe in a particular situation or environment.
- The completion of daily checklists
- Past injury forms are analysed once a term by the Assistant and Director to minimise or eliminate risks.
- Hazards being reported in a maintenance book.

## CHILD PROTECTION

East Adelaide School OSHC endeavours to ensure that child protection is paramount by:

- Educators understanding that all children have the right to be safe and protected
- All staff understanding that they must comply with legislation and ensure a child safe environment
- All staff understand that they are mandatory notifiers with a legal obligation to notify the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 or if at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000 or Police Assistance on 13 14 44.
- Supervision is effective to ensure they understand that child safety is everyone's responsibility.
- All suspected child sexual abuse is reported to the police as neglecting this could potentially be deemed a criminal offence.
- OSHC Leadership will ensure training and development are provided for all educators, staff, and volunteers in child protection
- Ensuring all RHAN, WWCC & Police Checks are valid and up to date
- All educators completing training in Protective Practices & Sexual Behaviour in Children & Young People
- The Service maintaining a complaints register
- Maintaining appropriate sign-in / out protocols

## RISK ASSESSMENT & RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

It is a legislative requirement that management, staff and educators implement a risk management system where they identify and minimise hazards and risks within the workplace to ensure a child safe environment.

The key principles of Risk Management include:

1. Identifying all hazards or potential hazards in the Service/residence/venue
2. Assess the risk of harm or potential harm for each hazard
3. Control or manage the risk – Risk Rating Matrix
4. Monitor and improve safety – Risk Assessment Action Plan
5. Evaluate and Review

## EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Management will ensure that copies of the emergency and evacuation floor plan are displayed in specific positions near each exit of the Service premises, including indoor and outdoor learning areas. All staff and educators are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and regulatory requirements. Rehearsals for emergency and evacuation procedures, including lock downs, are conducted at least once every three months. Records will be kept for all rehearsals.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE AUTHORISATION

Our Service prioritises children's safety at all times. Staff and educators will only release children to an authorised person as named on the child's FullyBooked account. Management will request families provide current court orders, and parenting plans to ensure our records are up to date.

## ONLINE SAFETY

All children must return the EAS OSHC ICT Agreement form that is signed by a parent / guardian, the child and the Service Assistant Director / Director. This signed agreement states that children will use their laptops appropriately by following the ICT guidelines. Personal mobile phones are not used to take photos or video of children or young people at the Service. Only educational software programs and apps that have appropriate content and have been examined prior to allowing their use are used in the Service. Children are always supervised using any technology. Any child caught breaching the ICT Agreement will have their ICT privileges taken away for the remainder of the term.

## EQUIPMENT, FURNITURE & MAINTENANCE RECORD

There are several factors that can contribute to a hazard, such as a deprived program, insufficient supervision and dilapidated equipment. To ensure a child safe environment free from hazards, our Service has implemented practices and continue to monitor Service policies and procedures that uphold Australian Safety Standards.

The premises and all equipment and furniture used within the Service are audited to ensure all aspects are safe, clean and in good repair. We understand that hazards are specific to developmental stages; educators are aware that toys and equipment need to be checked to ensure they are safe and developmentally appropriate for children. Regular checks occur within the Service to ensure that all toys, furniture and equipment are in good condition and working order.

## **STORAGE OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES**

We reduce the risk of harm to children, young people and educators by using eco-friendly products. Our Service will endeavour to provide a safe environment where necessary chemical and hazardous equipment are safely stored away from children and handled appropriately.

## **CONTINUOUS REVIEW**

To ensure we maintain a culture of continuous improvement, we will ensure our child safe practices are regularly reviewed, evaluated and improved. We aim to ensure all educators, staff, students and volunteers understand and effectively implement our policies and procedures to provide a child safe environment at our Service. Our policies are reviewed every three years; however, they are updated if changes need to be made within that time. We will regularly review and monitor the effectiveness of our Child Safe policies and procedures and invite children, young people, staff members, educators, families and communities to contribute to their development. Any updates or revisions will be communicated to all stakeholders.



## SOURCES

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).  
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Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016  
Children's Health and Safety – An analysis of Quality Area 2 of the National Quality Standard  
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Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023).  
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Government of South Australia. Department of Human Services. Guideline to writing a policy  
Government of South Australia. Department for Child Protection  
<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/>  
Government of South Australia. Department of Child Protection. Information sharing guidelines.  
National Principles for Child Safe Organisations  
Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).  
United Nations Convention of Rights of the Child, (1989). (UNCRC)  
Work Health and Safety Act, (2011).



**REVIEW**

<b>POLICY REVIEWED BY</b>	<b>[NAME]</b>	<b>[POSITION]</b>	<b>[POSITION]</b>	<b>[DATE]</b>
		OSHC Director		
		School Principal		
		Governing Council member		
<b>POLICY REVIEWED</b>	April 2024	<b>NEXT REVIEW DATE</b>	April 2027	