

Fleurieu Occasional Community Children's Centre

Supervision Policy

Services have a responsibility to protect the health and safety of each individual at all times. A service's health and safety policies and practices affect an individual's physical and psychological health and safety.

The Supervision Policy is important not only for children, families and staff/carers, but relates to every person who enters the service's premises.

Federal, state and territory governments have their own Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) legislation and regulations, which govern the standards of health and safety in the workplace. Therefore, services must comply with the relevant OHS legislation.

Policy statement

- Fleurieu Occasional Community Children's Centre has a duty of care to provide all persons¹ with a safe and healthy environment.
- The service defines 'supervision' as the active supervision of children for health and safety reasons and the type of supervising which promotes, supports, builds on and challenges children's learning and development.
- The service's Supervision Policy is committed to:
 - complying with South Australia's Licensing Regulations and adult/child ratios;
 - ensuring that children are supervised at all times;
 - considering the design and arrangement of children's environments to support active supervision;
 - using supervision skills to reduce or prevent injury or incident to children and adults;
 - guiding staff/carers to make decisions about when children's play needs to be interrupted and redirected;
 - supporting staff/carers and their caregiving strategies;
 - providing consistent supervision strategies when the service requires relief staff; and
 - acknowledging and understanding when supervision is required for high risk experiences and/or the ratio of adults to children is increased.

There may be circumstances where the service increases the adult ratios above licensing requirements to improve children's safety. This can include during excursions, when children are swimming in or playing near large volumes of water (swimming pools or fishponds), or when children are unwell.

- It is understood that there is a shared legal responsibility and accountability between, and a commitment by, all persons to implement the service's Supervision Policy, procedures and practices.
- The service also complies with OHS National Standards, codes of practice, Australian Standards and best practice recommendations from recognised authorities.

Strategies and practices

Principles of active supervision

Supervision is one of the most important caregiving strategies and skills required by staff/carers to develop and master. Active supervision is a combination of listening to and watching children play, being aware of the environment and its potential risks, the weather conditions, the time of day, managing small and large groups of children, and an understanding of child development including theories about how children play.

It is also crucial that staff/carers are aware of the different ages, personalities, behaviours and characteristics of the children in their care. How children interact, communicate and play with one another is dependent on staff/carers building relationships with children to learn about who they are, how they react in certain situations and discover their interests. These are vital skills to develop as they assist staff to predict children's play patterns, which affects how staff/carers plan and establish environments and coordinate supervision strategies to maximise children's safety and ability to play free from harm or injury.

Different factors can impact the effectiveness of supervision including:

- *Positioning of staff/carers in the environment*
- *Scanning the environment*
- *Listening when children play*
- *Knowledge of the environment and its potential risks*
- *Setting up the environment*
- *Transitioning groups of children*
- *Knowledge of the children in care and understanding how groups of children interact and play together*

Staff, carers, students and volunteers as role models

Children learn through example and modelling is an important way to teach children about safe behaviours and practices. Staff/carers, students and volunteers must comply with the Supervision Policy.

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