

Purpose

This policy will provide clear guidelines to:

- i. outline the supervision arrangements required for children in education and care services; and
- ii. ensure adequate and active supervision of children at all times.

Policy statement

General

1. The *Organisation* will ensure the service has reasonable access to policies.
2. The definitions at the end of this policy must be read to support understanding. Where definitions are required, the word/s will be in *italics*.
3. This policy applies to all services operating in accordance with the:
 - a) Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA),
 - b) Education and Care National Regulations,
 - c) Education and Care National Laws, and
 - d) National Quality Standards (NQS).
4. Educators responsible for the supervision of children are to be aware of the National Child Safe Principles or those relevant to their state or territory.
5. This policy provides specific information related to the supervision of children that is not incorporated into other policies. When making decisions and determining practices, the related policies must be read to include (but not be limited to):
 - a) **SER-POL-030 Staffing Arrangement NQS Policy,**
 - b) **SER-POL-009 Interactions with Children Policy**
 - c) **SER-POL-017 Event and Transport Policy,**
 - d) **SER-POL-008 Health, Safety and Hygiene Policy,**
 - e) **SER-POL-016 Sleep and Rest Policy,**
 - f) **SER-POL-022 Hand Washing Policy,**
 - g) **SER-POL-023 Toileting Policy,** and
 - h) **SER-POL-015 Child Protection Policy.**

6. All staff are responsible for reporting to line management if this policy (or related policies) are not being followed. If unsatisfied with the line management's response, an Executive Director (ED) or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is to be informed immediately.

Developing and reviewing risk management plans and practice

7. The *director* and the regional manager are responsible for writing the **QM-PLA-001 Risk Management Plan (RMP)** to mitigate any risks, ensuring children are always appropriately supervised.
8. The RMP must include (at a minimum) mitigation strategies:
 - a) for each room and outdoor area including risks associated with children being dropped off and collected;
 - b) for educators to immediately mark a child on the roll at pick up and off the roll at collection;
 - c) to ensure children are signed in on QK Kiosk immediately on arrival and signed out on departure;
 - d) to prevent children leaving unattended or being unaccounted for at any time;
 - e) when children are sleeping including when other children are outdoors;
 - f) when children have additional health needs;
 - g) related to the physical environment where it has been identified that equipment or service design cannot be altered to address the issue;
 - h) for any transport that occurs;
 - i) for activities that present a higher risk of injury (such as woodwork or sensory and waterplay activities); and
 - i. all other *high-risk times*.
9. Led by the educational leader, the director or the regional manager, all staff are to critically reflect on the RMP, the supervision practice, and the environment and document improvement strategies on the *service's* Quality Improvement Plan when applicable.
10. The regional manager must **observe** and **question** the director, *room leaders, nominated supervisor, responsible person* and *responsible educators* on supervision practice and **check** related documentation to ensure it is compliant when visiting or undertaking service audits.
11. Any concerns or non-compliance must be brought immediately to the attention of line management and appropriate action implemented, or the matter escalated to an executive director or the CEO to ensure supervision is at the required standard.

12. The regional manager is responsible for inducting all directors, acting directors and *nominated supervisors* and for ensuring that the director has inducted all *responsible persons* on the requirements for supervising children documented in RMPs and this policy. This must occur on every occasion (regardless of whether the person concerned has acted in the position previously).

Accountability for supervision of children

13. The *director* and *nominated supervisor* (or *responsible person*) have overall responsibility for ensuring the adequate supervision of children in accordance with the RMP and this policy. However, the *room leader* and staff assigned to each room have day to day responsibility.
14. When there has been an incident where a child has been unaccounted for:
- a) the *director* and *nominated supervisor* (or *responsible person*) must:
 - report the matter to the *Organisation* as soon as the reporter becomes aware of the incident;
 - complete a **SER-FOR-022 Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record**;
 - notify parents at pick up or sooner; and
 - b) the *regional manager* must:
 - check that the RMP and supervision practices are the required standard;
 - report all serious incidents to the regulatory authority and/or contract manager (if required) within 24 hours; and
 - report the incident to their line manager.

Day to day supervision

15. Staffing arrangements must support adequate supervision including children with additional needs (as required).
16. Educators under the age of 18 years, students and volunteers must always be supervised (and not left alone with children at any point).
17. Educators working towards their Certificate III must not be rostered on alone in rooms or be left alone with children at any time other than a *brief incidental period, in relation to supervision* (e.g. when the qualified in the room is changing a nappy, answering the phone or using the bathroom). Prior to a *brief incidental period, in relation to supervision* - the perimeter must be checked to ensure all entry and exit points are secure.

18. At the beginning of each day the director is to ensure that the *room leader* or the Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) checks with staff that they understand the supervision requirements of the children in their care and how supervision requirements will be managed throughout the day to include:
 - c) which educator is the *responsible educator* in the room;
 - a) those children with additional needs and health requirements (e.g. allergies or medication);
 - b) positive behaviour support plans or any matter that will require attention of staff supervising children;
 - c) any other children that may need additional supervision;
 - d) how children will be supervised in relation to *high-risk times* (including family grouping and indoor/outdoor transitions);
 - e) how risky play and/or high-risk points or places will be supervised;
 - f) how parents entering and exiting the room to deliver or collect their children will be managed to ensure safe supervision and compliance with the **SER-PRO-020 Child Sign-in and Out Procedure**; and
 - g) who will be primarily responsible for supervising children when the *room leader* leaves the room.
19. The person responsible for the room must develop a documented approach, understood by all educators in the room, which outlines the room supervision routine (including all points above) and allocates responsibilities between the more and less experienced educators in the room. This is to be reviewed each term/quarter at a minimum.
20. Educators must always be clear which children they are responsible for supervising. If unclear about anything related to supervision, they are to request the information they need and inform the director or above if there is still uncertainty.
21. Educators are to actively supervise children by ensuring each child is always in sight and/or hearing of an educator, including during toileting, sleep, rest, meal and transition routines.
22. Communication is key to supervision. Educators will think out loud (speak) and wait to hear a verbal response from other educators in the room to acknowledge:
 - a) when they are leaving or re-entering a room for any reason;
 - b) if they are taking children with them; and
 - c) if they are going to undertake housekeeping duties or anything that would prevent them supervising children adequately.
23. At no time will staff stop directly supervising children if:

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- a) they have not verbally confirmed that another educator is supervising the children they are responsible for; or
- b) there is not enough staff in the room to adequately supervise the children.

High-risk times

24. Educators must comply with all requirements in this policy with additional responsibilities related to *high-risk times*.
25. The service is to have a documented and detailed RMP approved and checked by a regional manager or above for times identified as high-risk by the industry to include (but not be limited to):
 - a) beginning and end of day (drop-off and pick-up of children);
 - b) family grouping times;
 - c) transitions (e.g. outdoor to indoor);
 - d) events (e.g. excursions and incursions);
 - e) water play;
 - f) meal times;
 - g) when a child has a known allergy;
 - h) school drop off and pick up;
 - i) opening a new service or at a new venue;
 - j) new and *relief* staff are employed; and
 - k) during and after renovations.
26. The RMP for *high-risk times* must include:
 - a) roll calls at regular intervals to ensure children are not left unsupervised, isolated, leave the service unattended or with an unauthorised person;
 - b) an identified nominated *responsible educator* for each high-risk time; and
 - c) the completion of **SER-FOR-072 Staff Ratio Check Form** or **SER-FOR-103 Kindergarten Day Sheet, Sign-in and Sign-out Form** (for Kindergarten Services) by the *responsible educator* and shared by all educators every 30 minutes throughout the day.
27. The *responsible educator* is to be recognisable (i.e. wearing a vest or a lanyard) or have verbally confirmed and heard back from educators that he/she is recognised as the *responsible educator* during the high-risk time.

28. At *high-risk times* educators must not be distracted from supervising children by requests from children, parents or other educators. If distractions from others are occurring, the following applies:
- a) verbally ask for and have (verbally) confirmed assistance from another educator; or
 - b) explain you will assist after the *high-risk time* has ended.
29. At no time is an educator to undertake any other duties (e.g. going to storerooms, washing dishes, or answering the phone) or respond to requests when supervising children at *high-risk times*.
30. Practices, locations (e.g. play areas) and routines must be consistent and familiar and identified in the curriculum or supervision routine and the RMP for high risk times. Changes to routines at *high-risk times* must be reflected upon, documented on the RMP and approved by a regional manager or above before the change is implemented.
31. If an *incident* occurs that impacts on the adequate supervision of children at *high-risk times* the *responsible educator* must take control and contain the situation.
32. Containing the situation will require the *responsible educator* to be solely focussed on the supervision of all children. All actions and activities will cease, the physical environment controlled, or children moved to a location that supports adequate supervision. Immediate assistance is to be sought.
33. If assistance is not immediately available, the regional manager or above is to be called to provide guidance before activities or actions can re-commence.

Excursions, incursions or events

34. Educators responsible for supervising children during excursions, incursions, events and school drop-off and pick-up must do so in accordance with the associated policies and procedures.
35. A *responsible educator* must be designated by the Nominated Supervisor and documented on the **SER-PLA-004 Regular Excursion, Risk Assessment, Plan and Evaluation – School Drop off and Pick up Form** and **SER-PLA-003 Excursion Risk Assessment, Plan and Evaluation Form**.

The environment

36. Educators are to ensure all doors and gates to unsupervised and/or unlicensed areas are always closed to prevent children moving into unsafe areas. No child should be allowed to gain entry to unsafe or unsupervised areas such as storage rooms, offices, kitchens, laundries or staff rooms at any time.

37. Educators will be strategically situated throughout the learning environment, both interacting and supervising children. Educators adjust supervision levels according to the area of the service, the skills, age mix, dynamics and size of the group of children they are supervising.
38. Educators are required to regularly move around the area, scanning the room, responding to each child's needs in a timely matter and ensuring they know where each child is at all times.
39. It is not acceptable for educators to stand together in groups engaging in discussions, nor to sit while supervising unless comforting a child or interacting with children. It is the responsibility of directors to performance manage educators that are not actively supervising children in accordance with this policy.
40. The learning environment, including equipment, furniture and activities should be set up to ensure effective supervision. Blind spots must be monitored by educators.
41. Safety checks need to be completed prior to entering the outdoor area and for the duration of outdoor play to ensure no items have been placed in the yard that may pose a risk to a child. Children should remain indoors with a supervising educator whilst this is completed.
42. Educators required to complete routine nappy changes or toileting during outdoor time will tell and ensure other educators respond verbally, identifying the children they transition indoors. Educators will consider ratio and adequate supervision of the remaining children.

Handover and relief induction

43. Before educators or directors go on leave or are absent from the service the director must ensure the *relief* person acting in the position has been adequately inducted including the requirements for supervising children documented in RMPs and this policy (regardless of whether the person concerned has acted in the position previously).
44. *Room leaders* and educators must ensure that their room has been properly handed over to another suitably qualified staff member if leaving before the end of the day.
45. Before leaving at the end of their shift, the *room leader* or *responsible educator* must ensure the children are handed over in accordance with clause 18 and check:
 - a) all children who have left are crossed off the roll and signed out on QK Kiosk;
 - b) details and documentation of any incidents, illness, or behaviour concerns for a child that have occurred that day;
 - c) **SER-FOR- 072 Staff – Room Ratio Register Form** has been updated; and
 - d) the remaining educators know where children's belongings are located.

Reporting requirements

Refer to **QM-FOR-014 Organisational Chart**.

Legislation compliance

Refer to **QM-SS-001 Regulations and Legislation Register**.

Implementation

The *Organisation* will:

- ensure that premises and facilities are designed and maintained to facilitate supervision of children while maintaining the rights and dignity of all children; and
- be committed to supporting the adequate supervision of children including providing additional resources or reducing child numbers when required.

The regional manager will:

- meet the requirements in this policy;
- ensure adequate inductions of *relief* directors;
- report all serious incidents to the regulatory authority within 24 hours;
- monitor and review services supervision practices including RMP and room supervision routines; and
- ensure the executive management team are advised of any risks or concerns regarding the supervision of children.

The director or responsible person will:

- ensure staff are inducted correctly;
- alert line management immediately if they believe there is a risk associated with the supervision of children;
- ensure an appropriate service RMP and room supervision routine is in place that includes high risk supervision times;
- consult when developing the RMP strategies and lead a critical reflection with staff at least quarterly to review and improve the RMP and room supervision routines;
- ensure staff work in accordance with the RMP strategies;
- develop and maintain rosters that ensure adequate supervision when children are at the service or on excursions and advise line management when staffing does not ensure adequate supervision;

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- report when children are unaccounted for to the *Organisation* as soon as you become aware and the child's parents at pick up or sooner; and
- ensure the **SER-FOR-022 Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record** is complete correctly.

Room leaders and responsible educators will:

- ensure all required checks are undertaken (including delegating the responsibility to another educator when they are absent from the room) and the relevant documentation completed for their room in accordance with this policy;
- develop and regularly review a documented supervision routine (ensuring staffing placement and practice is appropriate for adequate supervision) and that everyone (including relief educators) working in the room is aware of the supervision practice required;
- alert line management if they believe there is a risk to children's safety;
- ensure the environment is set-up to maximise the ability of educators to supervise all areas accessible to children; and
- at all times ensure staff-to-child ratios are met.

All staff will:

- alert the nominated supervisor or director if they believe there are concerns related to the supervision of children;
- complete all required documentation;
- alert the nominated supervisor immediately of any breaches of this policy; and
- always supervise children in accordance with this policy.

Parents of children enrolled at the service will:

- inform the service of all supervision needs of their child;
- respect when educators cannot assist them due to supervision responsibilities; and
- sign their child into and out of the *service* each day.

Related policies, forms and checklists

QM-PLA-001 Risk Management Plan

SER-FOR-072 Staff Ratio Check Form

SER-FOR-103 Kindergarten Day sheet, sign in and sign out form (Kindergarten Services only)

SER-PLA-003 Excursion Risk Assessment, Plan and Evaluation Form

SER-POL-015 Child Protection Policy

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SER-POL-016 Sleep and Rest Policy

SER-POL-023 Toileting Policy

SER-POL-030 Staff Arrangements Policy

SER-PRO-016 Family Grouping Procedure

SER-PRO-020 Child Sign-in and Out Procedure

SER-PRO-024 Safe Sleep Practices NQS Procedure

SER-PLA-004 Regular Excursion, Risk Assessment, Plan and Evaluation – School Drop-off and Pick up Form

Definitions

Brief incidental period, in relation to supervision: refer to in-text example; *when the qualified in the room is changing a nappy, answering the phone or using the bathroom.*

Director: Refers to the director or manager of a service

Educational leader: The nominated representative at the service responsible for the educational program and practice.

High-risk times: Periods of time of increased activity on the premises which requires additional supervision to reduce the risk of injury to staff and attendees. Refer to Clause 25 of this document for activities that are considered high risk.

Manager: Refers to the director or manager of a service.

Nominated supervisor: Is the person nominated by the approved provider to act on their behalf being responsible for the day-to-day operations of the service.

Organisation: One Tree Community Services Incorporated.

Parents: Refers to the legal guardian of a child.

Relief staff: Any staff member who is acting in another staff members position including agency staff.

Responsible educator: Is the most qualified or experienced person in each room, or the person delegated by the director or room leader as responsible for supervision (including at *high-risk times*, on an excursion or incursion or at pick-up or drop-off times responsible for supervising children).

Responsible person: Is the person nominated by the approved provider to act on their behalf being responsible for the in the daily charge of the service when the nominated supervisor is absent from the service in operational hours.

Room leader: Is a qualified early education and care professional who responsible for the day to day running of the room they work in.

Service: Refers to an early education and care or other service operated by One Tree Community Services.

Staff: Refers to all staff working at an early education and care service.

Version History

Version <i>(ISOC only)</i>	Submitted by	Change Date	Approver	Approval Date	Description
1.0	Danielle Heaton	08/10/2020	Services Karri Hillier	08/10/2020	First release version.
2.0	Jennifer De Bruyn	09/09/2021	Alice MacPhillamy	10/09/2021	Review and amendments applied in relation to high-risk times, and requirements for brief incidental periods responsible educators may be required to momentarily leave the room.