

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Children need safe and secure environments to thrive in their life and learning. Active supervision is integral to creating environments that are safe and responsive to the needs of all children and allows educators to engage in meaningful interactions with children. Active supervision is necessary for educators to be alert and aware of risks and hazards and the potential for accidents and injury, not only in their immediate location but also throughout the service.

At all times children are being educated and cared for in the service, staff must maintain adequate supervision. Positioning of staff whilst maintaining the required ratios is key to achieving this, whilst taking into consideration:

- The number of children and staff in attendance,
- The experience, knowledge and skill of each staff member,
- Observed characteristics of each child, including children with additional learning needs, and level of engagement in play experiences,
- The layout of the physical environment and characteristics of play spaces
- Accident and emergency procedures: and
- Centre program and routine, including arrival and departure times

1.2 PURPOSE

Supervision is one of the most important caregiving strategies and skills required by staff 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, an understanding of child development and each child's individual needs.

There are also requirements to notify the regulatory authority of any serious incidents or complaints alleging the safety, health or wellbeing of children has been compromised.

1.3 SCOPE

This policy and associated procedures outlines the requirements and considerations needed to be made by staff to achieve active supervision that is responsive to the changing needs of all children in attendance at the education and care service.

1.4 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS

Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Section 174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
Reg 101(2)(f)	Supervision during excursions
Reg 115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision

Reg 123	Minimum educator to child ratios
Reg 168(2)(h)	Policies and procedures are required in relation to providing a child safe environment
Reg 176	Timeframes for notifying certain information to the Regulatory Authority
Reg 102C(2)(g)	Supervision during Transportation
Reg 168(2)(ga)	Policies and procedures are required in relation to transportation.

LINKS TO THE NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

Standard 2.2	Each child is protected
Element 2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
Element 2.3.2	Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury

1.5 STAKEHOLDERS

This document applies to all Children and Family Services Managers and Coordinators, Centre Directors, Nominated Supervisors, Responsible Persons, Early Childhood Teachers, Child Care Workers, Child Care Assistants, Helpers, Cooks, and other relevant staff (voluntary and paid) who may be engaged at the education and care service.

SECTION 2 – POLICY

2.1 OBJECTIVES

- To strictly adhere to the legislated requirements to ensure that all children are actively and adequately supervised at all times they are being educated and care for at the service
- For staff to be aware of their supervision responsibilities at all times, and the important role they play in ensuring children are actively supervised
- To take a “risk management approach” to supervision whilst balancing the need to enable children to exercise autonomy and agency in their play and exploration
- For a supervision plan to be in place, and regularly reviewed to ensure it is responsive to the individual needs of all children being educated and cared for at the service

2.2 APPLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Active supervision of children can be achieved in a number of ways:

- Careful planning of rosters to ensure that educators are always available to respond to children and that required ratios are maintained at all times
- Developing a supervision plan that is responsive to the needs of children, and regularly discussed and reviewed by staff

- Consider the setup of the environment to eliminate the risk of children not being supervised, and is conducive to active and effective supervision, this is informed by reflective practices and undertaking risk assessment
- Consideration and planning of key transition times where supervision could potentially be compromised if not managed appropriately (e.g. nappy changes, transitioning to toileting, hand-washing or meal times, arrival and departure times, unplanned events...)
- Flexible supervision arrangements which allow for supervision of individual children and small and large groups of children at any given time (e.g. sleeping/resting children, progressive indoor/outdoor play)
- Close observation of children to provide support and to extend on children's play experiences, and taking a risk assessment approach to supervision that allows educators to use professional judgement to determine the level of supervision that is required for particular scenarios, balanced with the development of children's agency, independence and appropriate risk-taking
- Actively engaging with children to provide support in their learning. Effective supervision requires a combination of observation and engagement. Educators need to assess and respond to children's supervision needs in conjunction with engaging with children to promote quality learning opportunities.
- Scanning or regularly looking around the area (including excursions) to observe all children in the environment to ensure all children are adequately supervised and not exposed to any risk or harm
- Noticing any changes in the environment, particularly noise levels or changes in tone and voices
- Evaluation and critical reflection of play and learning experiences, and determining which situations, if any, may pose a risk to children's health safety and wellbeing
- Ensuring that all children at the service are observed when they arrive to and depart from the service so that staff can adjust their positioning when engaged in supervision
- Good teamwork and communication between staff, so colleagues are aware of each other's presence and level of engagement with the children, and knowledge of each child, particularly of their specific and individual needs
- Ensuring that any discussion with staff or parents and carers does not compromise the supervision of children, and that non-important discussions should not take priority over the safety and wellbeing of children
- **Conduct regular roll calls using the Electronic Sign In (ESI) and document the numbers of children and their positioning on the Daily Compliance Checklist**
- Children of different ages and abilities will require different levels of supervision during excursions and periods of transportation
- Consideration should be given to supervision during excursions or children's transportation as it necessarily involves movement outside the service premises
- **Specifically for Mobile Services:** Each Mobile Children's Service operated by Fairfield City Council will have in place a Mobile Venue Management Plan. This plan outlines supervision risks associated with each mobile venues and identifies strategies in order to ensure full compliance with National Regulations.

2.3 KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

COORDINATOR

- Ensuring the staffing levels at each service are suffice to meet the educator to child ratios in the Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- That this policy is regularly discussed with services and the policy is regularly reviewed, particularly if an incident of compromised supervision has occurred
- Reflecting on the service environments are part of the monthly service visit discussions, supporting to identify and assess risks that may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of the child, and specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised

NOMINATED SUPERVISOR AND/OR RESPONSIBLE PERSON:

- Nominated supervisors and/or responsible person must be rostered on arrivals and departure times across the week to ensure the identification of potential risks during drop offs and collections of children.
- Organise rosters to ensure correct staff to child ratios are met at all times in line with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, whilst taking into consideration:
 - Rostering the most experienced Educators to open and close the service will ensure familiarity with the building, facilities and procedures. It will also assist in identifying family members during arrival and departure times
 - Having familiar staff at open and close times will assist in identifying authorised persons for drop offs and collections of children
- Ensure that a risk assessment approach is implemented when developing the indoor and outdoor supervision plans.
- Document a supervision plan and strategies for both the indoor and outdoor areas. This will assist educators to position themselves effectively for supervising the children's play and having the children needs in mind. They will take into consideration the layout of the premises and grounds, any higher risk activities e.g. the presence of any animals, the location of activities, exit doors, gates and the location of bathrooms and/or nappy change facilities.
- Regularly review the supervision plan and strategies with educators to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and its implementation, reflecting on the changing needs of children. The supervision plan and strategies will be displayed for families in all rooms and in the outdoor area.
- Review Supervision effectiveness informally through discussions at least each month at staff meetings- this provides staff with opportunity to raise concerns or input ideas and suggestions
- To ensure correct staff to child ratios are met at all times in line with the National Regulations within all the Centres across Fairfield City Council.

- Communicate with staff on a daily basis and make allowances for staff that need “Time Out” from the children. (Everyone has these moments and being able to approach them in a constructive and mature way may save a child from risk during periods of ‘Supervision lapse’).
- Staff and management share the responsibility to keep up to date with current research and practices recommended by recognised health and safety authorities.
- To ensure regular roll calls using the Electronic Sign In (ESI) are being conducted during times of, but not limited to; transition, arrival and departure times, changes to staffing shifts and breaks and document the numbers of children and their positioning on the Daily Compliance Checklist

Staff:

- Regularly review the supervision plan and strategies to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and its implementation by educators.
- Conduct regular Roll calls, implementing the Roll Call Procedure, physically checking the location of individual children signed into the service at the time of day the roll call is being conducted using the ESI and documenting the numbers, ages and locations of children on the Daily Compliance Checklist.
- Staff should be aware of their location in all play areas to ensure that you are able to scan the play areas effectively. This means that you are still able to be involved in children’s play; however, you need to be alert of other play areas.
- When leaving the area e.g.: bathroom break, ensure that the staff are informed of where you are going and how long you will be.
- Maintaining effective communication at all times, particularly when staff leave the area for programming, bathroom and lunch breaks, or leave the premises for the day. This might include hand-over diaries, communication books, or verbal messages. These occasions are also a time to complete roll calls using the Electronic Sign In (ESI) and document the numbers of children and their positioning on the Daily Compliance Checklist.
- If educator to child ratios exceed regulation requirements at the time their shift ends, staff will be required to stay until ratios change.
- Ensure that supervision is **active** and **interactive** with children. It is not suitable for staff to stand and watch, or talk to other staff and parents. Staff will discuss with each other the best positions of supervision, especially in the playground, to avoid clustering in one spot.
- Arrange the education and care environment to maximise the ability of educators to supervise all areas accessible to children. Particular focus will be on gates, the fence line and all doors during arrival and departure times.

- Scan the environment while interacting with individuals or small groups. Educators will position themselves to maximise their view of the environment and the children's play.
- Implement consistent supervision strategies and not perform other duties while responsible for the supervision of children.
- If parents approach you and request to talk to you about any detailed matter (for example, a new enrolment, or a concern or complaint they have) while you are responsible for the supervision of children, explain that you are currently supervising children and explain they may need to wait to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children is not compromised. Staff are to exercise professional judgment and determine that children are adequately supervised before speaking to parents, and may also ask the parent to make a time to speak with centre staff.

SECTION 3 – GOVERNANCE

3.1 RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

POLICY NUMBER	QMPOLECS013 Excursion Policy
	QMPOLECS013 Safe Sleep/Rest Policy
	QMPOLECS067 Incident, Injury, Illness & Trauma Policy
	QMPOLEFDC094 Transport, Children & Road Safety Policy
	QMFQM028 Service Level Agreement

3.2 RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner	Children and Family Services
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3.3 VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
1	January 2012	CFS Manager	New policy to reflect new legislation
2	January 2015	CFS Manager	Updated to reflect amended forms and processes
3	July 2016	CFS Manager	Updated content
4	January 2019	CFS Manager	Simplified and updated content, formatting to corporate template
5	February 2020	CFS Manager	Add NS/Responsible person responsibility
6	March 2022	CFS Manager	National Law and National Regulations Supervision During Transport Related Policies/Procedures/Guidelines

3.4 REVIEW DATE

Every 5 years as required by quality assurance requirements or when a change to governing legislation occurs, or practice, whichever sooner.