

D-42 Child Safe Policy

NQS

QA. 2.2	Safety.
QA. 2.2.1	Supervision.
QA. 2.2.3	Child protection.
QA. 4.1	Staffing arrangements.
QA. 4.1.1	Organisation of educators.
QA. 4.2.2	Professional standards.
QA. 5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child.
QA. 7.1.2	Management systems.
QA. 7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities.

National Law & regulations

Sec. 162A	Child protection training
Sec. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Sec. 166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
Sec. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Reg. 82	Tobacco, drug, and alcohol-free environment
Reg. 84	Awareness of child protection law
Reg. 103	Premises, furniture, and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
Reg. 115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
Reg. 122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
Reg. 123	Educator to child ratios – centre-based services
Reg. 145	Staff record
Reg. 155	Interactions with children
Reg. 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Reg. 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Reg. 175 (d) (e)	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
Reg. 176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
Reg. 181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
Reg. 358	Working with children check to be read

My Time, Our Place

LO. 1	Children and young people feel safe, secure, and supported
	Children and young people learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect
LO. 3	Children and young people become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing

Child Safe Standard

Standard 1	Child safety is embedded in organizational leadership, governance and culture
Standard 2	Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Standard 3	Families and communities are informed and involved
Standard 4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
Standard 5	People working with children are suitable and supported
Standard 6	Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse and child focused
Standard 7	Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
Standard 8	Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur
Standard 9	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved
Standard 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

Policy Statement

All children at CONCORD OSHC have a right to feel safe, protected and included.

This policy is part of our organisation's ongoing commitment to protecting the children in our care from harm and abuse. It outlines the child safe practices our organisation has put in place to minimise the risks to child safety. The policy also sets out what is required from staff, including volunteers and others who interact with our organisation, so they know what is expected from them to keep children safe.

At CONCORD OSHC we are committed to the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care. The Statement of Commitment to Child Safety is available on the CONCORD OSHC website and is displayed at the entrance.

Our service ensures services and activities are inclusive of all children, including children with diverse needs.

Related Policies

- CONCORD OSHC Policy A-3: Philosophy
- CONCORD OSHC Policy A-11: Maintenance of Records
- CONCORD OSHC Policy A-15: Role of Management Committee
- CONCORD OSHC Policy A-17: Privacy and Confidentiality
- CONCORD OSHC Policy A-19: Nominated Supervisor
- CONCORD OSHC Policy C-1: Staff Recruitment and Selection
- CONCORD OSHC Policy C-3: Staff Orientation and Induction
- CONCORD OSHC Policy C-4: Educator Professionalism
- CONCORD OSHC Policy C-10: Volunteers/students/visitors
- CONCORD OSHC Policy C-11: Staff Child Ratios

- CONCORD OSHC Policy C-12: Communication
- CONCORD OSHC Policy C-14: Reportable Conduct
- CONCORD OSHC Policy D-11: Management of Incident, Injury and Trauma
- CONCORD OSHC Policy D-13: Illness and Infectious diseases
- CONCORD OSHC Policy D-22: Child protection/Mandatory reporting
- CONCORD OSHC Policy D-23: Child Management / Behaviour Guidance
- CONCORD OSHC Policy D-30: Supervision
- CONCORD OSHC Policy D-34: Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment
- CONCORD OSHC Policy: E-6: Safe use of technology
- CONCORD OSHC Policy E-11: Facebook

Procedure

Everyone in our service is expected to carry out the requirements specific to their role to keep children safe. This includes:

- Upholding our service's commitment to child safety
- Reading, signing and upholding the behaviours set out in our Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Creating a child safe risk management plan
- Meeting requirements across all other child safe policies and procedures, including child safe recruitment practices and risk management
- Taking part in regular reviews of our child safe documents
- Reporting all breaches of policies or any allegations of child harm or abuse and meeting all external reporting obligations
- Completing all child safe training
- Prohibit the use of personal devices while working directly with children Only use service issued devices that don't contain any photos, audio or videos of children for administration work from home

Any questions concerning child safety should be referred to the Centre director.

Active participation of children, families and communities

All CONCORD OSHC child related policies and procedures are easily accessible on our website and in the policy folder at the centre for everyone who accesses our service, including children, parents, carers and community members.

Children, parents and carers from diverse backgrounds and circumstances are encouraged to provide feedback on CONCORD OSHC child-related policies and procedures, including the Child Safe Code of Conduct that describes acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours and the risk assessment management plan.

CONCORD OSHC provides opportunities for children to provide feedback to educators and management on what makes them feel safe supported and included.

Definitions of harm and abuse

Psychological abuse (also known as emotional abuse)

This includes bullying, threatening and abusive language, intimidation, shaming and name calling, ignoring and isolating a child, and exposure to domestic and family violence.

Physical abuse

This includes physical punishment, such as pushing, shoving, punching, slapping and kicking, resulting in injury, burns, choking or bruising.

Sexual abuse

This includes the sexual touching of a child, grooming, and production, distribution or possession of child abuse material.

Grooming

This is a process where a person manipulates a child or group of children and sometimes those looking after them, including parents, carers, teachers and leaders. They do this to establish a position of 'trust' so they can then later sexually abuse the child.

Misconduct

This is inappropriate behaviour that may not be as severe as abuse but could indicate that abuse is occurring and would often be in breach of an organisation's Child Safe Code of Conduct. This could include showing a child something inappropriate on a phone, having inappropriate conversations with a child or an adult sitting with a child on their lap.

Lack of appropriate care

This includes not providing adequate and proper supervision, nourishment, clothing, shelter, education or medical care.

The child safe policy covers:

Embedding the paramouncy principle

The safety, welfare and best interests of children are placed above all other considerations, including commercial interests, staff convenience or operational constraints.

Risk assessments are to be implemented with a 'child first' lens to protect them from all potential threats (e.g. environmental and safety concerns).

The child's interests must prevail when there are conflicts of interest.

Reflections on the paramouncy principle are documented in meeting minutes, incident reports and the quality improvement plan (QIP).

Ongoing child safe employment practices

Our staffing policy and procedures outline how we implement ongoing child-safe employment practices and continually monitor the suitability of all staff and volunteers to work with children.

We ensure all relevant staff complete mandatory child safety training and undertake refresher training in line with legislative requirements, regulatory guidance and sector best practice.

We conduct regular checks and make reasonable enquiries to confirm that all workers and volunteers continue to meet child safety and suitability requirements. This includes:

- maintaining accurate and up-to-date staff records, including documenting and responding to any notices, allegations, investigations or changes that may affect a person's suitability to work with children
- regularly verifying Working With Children Check (WWCC) details and checking the prohibited persons register through NQA ITS
- monitoring WWCC expiry dates and reminding staff that renewal applications can be made up to 3 months prior to expiry
- immediately removing any person from child-related work if their WWCC status is barred, interim barred, expired, cannot be verified or if they otherwise cease to hold a valid WWCC clearance or application number.

We have secure and confidential processes for managing and recording all checks, enquiries, training records and notifications related to staff suitability. These processes support transparency, accountability and compliance with child safety requirements.

Transporting children

Best practice is to always have two adults travelling with children. If this is not possible, a suitable arrangement must be made between the organisation and the parents of the children. If a child is alone with an adult in a car they must sit on the back seat. Every child should be accounted for at the end of a journey.

Social media use and online communication

Staff and volunteers must never communicate privately with children online or on social media. Any necessary online communication should include the child's parent or carer in the correspondence.

Safe use of digital technologies

The service will distribute a Digital Devices Authorisation Form to all families, and this will also form part of the enrolment process moving forward. The form must be completed by parents or guardians whose child will bring a smart watch or other digital device to the service, outlining the specific devices the child will have in their possession.

Upon receipt of the completed form, the information will be recorded within the child's enrolment details to ensure all staff are aware that the child has an approved digital device.

All mobile phones must be handed to staff at the commencement of each session and will be securely stored in a locked box until the end of the session or until the child is collected.

Children wearing smart watches will be monitored by staff to ensure devices are used appropriately and in accordance with service expectations. If a smart watch is used inappropriately, it will be confiscated and securely stored in the lock box until the end of the session or until the child is collected.

At the beginning of every session, staff will generate and review a child information list to identify children authorised to have digital devices, ensuring correct procedures are followed at all times.

The service implements these procedures to ensure the safe, appropriate, and supervised use of digital technologies, supporting children's wellbeing, privacy, and safety while being educated and cared for at the service.

Photography and the use of images

Photos and videos of children can only be taken with the permission of parents or carers. Parents and carers must also approve any images used on our social media channels. It is unacceptable for staff or volunteers to take photos or videos of children, other than their own, on personal devices, or to share images without permission.

Physical contact

Physical contact with children should be kept to a minimum. Everyone involved in the organisation is expected to have healthy physical boundaries with children.

Gifts and benefits

Staff and volunteers must never give gifts to children, or bestow benefits of any kind to a child, unless they have direct permission from the child's parents or carers.

Secondary employment

Staff members must declare any secondary employment and make sure there are no conflicts of interest associated with the employment.

Staff and volunteers are not allowed to babysit children in our care unless they know the family or carer outside the organisation. If this is the case; they must let the service know that this arrangement is in place so it can be documented.

Out of hours contact with children

Staff and volunteers must let us know about any out-of-hours contact they have with children in our care. It is unacceptable for staff or volunteers to participate in the lives of children outside the organisation without a valid reason. Professional boundaries with the children in our care must be maintained at all times.

Illness and injury management

Injuries must be reported to the Responsible person on duty and first aid administered in a safe space within lines of sight of other adults.

Reporting requirements for different types of concerns or incidents

CONCORD OSHC D-22 Child Protection/Mandatory reporting policy sets out requirements and procedures if a staff member has concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child attending the service.

CONCORD OSHC C-14 Reportable Conduct policy sets out requirements and procedures for complaints, allegations, disclosures and reports, and external reporting obligations.

CONCORD OSHC A-14 Dealing with complaints policy outlines how families and children can raise their concerns with the centre and the procedures to be followed.

Complaints regarding concerns about harmful sexual behaviour of another child:

Educators should listen respectfully and take all family concerns seriously. Where possible, families are encouraged to put their concerns in writing – preferably by email to the Centre Director/Nominated Supervisor or Management Committee. Educators should refer to the **Child Protection Policy (D-22 Child Protection/Mandatory Reporting)**

It is essential that families feel heard and supported, and that all significant conversations are documented. The Director/Supervisor must be informed immediately to assess the situation and determine next steps.

Throughout the process, the privacy and dignity of all families involved will be protected. Families will be appropriately engaged in the handling of the matter and informed of decisions and outcomes, while confidentiality is maintained. Consideration will also be given to each child's stage of development and what constitutes age-appropriate behaviour.

A register of child protection concerns is maintained in a confidential document. Any concerns regarding a child's safety and wellbeing even if it does not meet the threshold for immediate mandatory reporting is entered onto the register. It helps identify patterns, trends and necessary follow up actions.

PROTECTION FOR REPORTERS

All reporters are protected against retribution for making or proposing to make a report under amendments to the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 effective 1 March 2020. The identity of the reporter is protected by law from being disclosed, except in certain exceptional circumstances. Provided the report is made in good faith:

- The report will not breach standards of professional conduct
- The report cannot lead to defamation and civil and criminal liability
- The report is not admissible in any proceedings as evidence against the person who made the report
- A person cannot be compelled by a court to provide the report or disclose its contents
- The identity of the person making the report is protected.

A report is also an exempt document under the *Freedom of Information Act 1989*

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard
- My Time, Our Place Framework for School Age Care in Australia – V2.0
- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act (1998)
- Privacy Act 1988
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998
- Working with Children Check NSW

- Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998
- Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998
- Children's Guardian Act 2019
- NQF Review: Providing a child safe environment
- Crimes Act 1900

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