

**DRAFT**

# A Guide to Developing Policies for Out of School Hours Care Services

to comply with  
Education and Care Services National Regulation 168

Developed by OSHCsa in consultation with  
the Department for Education and Child Development



**Government of South Australia**

Department for Education and  
Child Development



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# About this resource

This guide has been developed to assist Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) services in South Australia to review and prepare service policies to meet the Education and Care Services National Regulation 168 (2011). This document does not provide services with generic policies but rather is intended to support providers, line managers, directors, advisory group representatives and educators to develop their own.

Throughout this document all references to:

- **National Law** refer to the EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW
- **Regulations** refer to the EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS 2011
- **Standards** refer to the NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE AND SCHOOL AGE CARE
- **Approved Provider** refer to the 'approved operator' of the service who is responsible for the employment and management of the employees of the service as well as the compliance with all government requirements. On Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) sites, this will usually be the Governing Council, and for Catholic and Independent schools it will usually be the School Board
- **Child Care Service Handbook** refer to *Child Care Service Handbook 2010–2011* available at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au)
- **Learning framework** refer to *My Time, Our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia*.

## Regulation 168

Regulation 168 states that the *Approved Provider of an education and care service must ensure that the service has in place policies and procedures in relation to the matters set out in sub regulation (2) and includes:*

- (a) *health and safety, including matters relating to –*
  - (i) *nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements; and*
  - (ii) *sun protection; and*
  - (iii) *water safety, including safety during any water based activities; and*
  - (iv) *the administration of first aid*
- (b) *incident, injury, trauma and illness procedures complying with regulation 85;*
- (c) *dealing with infectious diseases, including procedures complying with regulation 88;*
- (d) *dealing with medical conditions in children, including the matters set out in regulation 90;*
- (e) *emergency and evacuation, including the matters set out in regulation 97;*
- (f) *delivery of children to, and collection of children from, education and care service premises, including procedures complying with regulation 99;*
- (g) *excursions, including procedures complying with regulations 100 to 102;*
- (h) *providing a child safe environment*
- (i) *staffing, including –*
  - (i) *a code of conduct for staff members; and*
  - (ii) *determining the responsible person present at the service; and*
  - (iii) *the participation of volunteers and students on practicum placements;*
- (j) *interactions with children, including the matters set out in regulations 155 and 156;*
- (k) *enrolment and orientation;*
- (l) *governance and management of the service, including confidentiality of records;*
- (m) *the acceptance and refusal of authorisations*
- (n) *payment of fees and provision of a statement of fees charged by the education and care service;*
- (o) *dealing with complaints.*

This does not mean, however, that a separate policy needs to be developed for each of these areas. What it does mean is that a service's policies must cover or address the policy requirements. Services may well have additional policies that they develop to meet particular site and community needs.

In this document, the information has been grouped to reflect Regulation 168. A policy template has also been included as a guide. If your current policies have been well maintained and regularly reviewed, please do not discard them but use this resource as a guide to align them with the Regulations.

Some services will have a well established process of policy review and for them this document will assist in that ongoing process.

OSHC service policies and procedures must reflect the service's statement of philosophy. OSHC service policies and procedures must be consistent with the Regulations, other relevant state and federal legislation and be developed in accordance with school/site and Approved Provider policies to ensure consistency for children and staff. Policies should reflect the agreed values and principles of the school/site, Approved Provider, advisory committee, educators, children and families.

When developing service policies and procedures, organisational policy requirements must be considered. For instance, the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) has specific organisational policies that must be met by services operated on DECD sites. Check with your line manager and refer to the Early Childhood Services website for further information at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/childrenservices/pages/earlychildhoodreform/PoliciesandProcedures](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/childrenservices/pages/earlychildhoodreform/PoliciesandProcedures). This website will clearly identify where site specific policies must be developed and where DECD policies can be applied. There will be ongoing development of this site. In addition, the information contained on this site will have links between the Regulations and the National Quality Standard.

## How to develop policies using this resource

This resource is not a definitive policy handbook. The format is designed to prompt the development and review of policies with suggestions for what should be considered and included. There are links to the Regulations and the National Quality Standard and other relevant legislation. The sample policies provided do not represent the 'right' way to run a service or comply with the Regulations. The resource is designed to assist service stakeholders develop and review policies and procedures that meet the needs of the service. Don't copy them exactly as it is likely they will not be right for your service, and don't forget to consider the following.

- Think carefully about your service and community needs and practices.
- Use samples and prompts as a starting point and consider broader organisational policies and practices.
- When developing your policies, check back to ensure that they meet the Regulations and meet other legislative requirements such as state and local government law and organisational/provider policy requirements.
- Background information has been provided in some instances as additional information that may assist with the policy development.
- The suggested policies that follow are grouped in accordance with the presentation in Regulation 168. The policies stipulated by the Regulations have, in some instances, been expanded in this document to include statements that many services would already use.
- Policies need to be ratified by the Approved Provider.
- There should be consultation with stakeholders when policies are changed or developed. Please note that it is now a requirement to notify families when policies are changed (refer to Regulation 172).
- Effectively index your service policies so that stakeholders can readily locate them as required.
- Individual services may develop additional policies to meet site and community needs.
- Other relevant legislation is identified as well as references/resource material/further reading.
- The Approved Provider must ensure that copies of the current policies and procedures required under Regulation 168 are available for inspection at the service at all times (Regulation 171).
- All policies need to be reviewed regularly and there should be space to add review dates as required.

## Resources/References

1. Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
2. National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care and associated guides
3. Child Care Service Handbook
4. Other resources such as those developed by the National Childcare Accreditation Council can be found at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) (go to the NCAC Archive).
5. The Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board of South Australia can be contacted on 1800 882 413.

**Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure the information is accurate at the time of publishing.**



# How to develop your service's statement of philosophy

**The service philosophy is to be included in the Quality Improvement Plan for your service.**

A written statement of philosophy outlines the principles under which the service operates. This philosophy reflects the principles and the National Law and the Framework for School Age Care. It underpins the decisions, policies and daily practices of the Approved Provider, nominated supervisor, educators and staff members and assists in planning, implementing and evaluating quality experiences for children.

It reflects a shared understanding of the role of the service with children, families and the community. (Refer to page 181 of the *Guide to the National Quality Standard*, ACECQA.)

The statement of philosophy must reflect the agreed values and principles of the school/site, Approved Provider, advisory committee, educators, children and families.

In preparing a statement of philosophy, it is essential for a service to reflect on the principles, practices and outcomes of the document *My Time, Our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia*.

Following are some ideas, taken from *Shared Visions for Outside School Hours Care* by Anne Kennedy and Anne Stonehouse (2004, p 17) that may also assist Approved Providers and educators to focus on outcomes for children as a philosophy for the service is developed.

Kennedy and Stonehouse listed the following desirable outcomes for children:

- *Self-esteem*
- *Comfort with and appreciation of differences among people*
- *Self-confidence, courage and resilience*
- *A sense of belonging to the group and to the local community*
- *Compassion and caring for others*
- *Conviction that they can change things, have an impact, make a difference*
- *Optimism, hope for the future*
- *Love of learning*
- *Openness, a critical questioning approach*
- *Willingness to persevere*
- *A sense of humour*
- *The ability to have fun and laugh*
- *Respect and caring for other people and for the physical environment*
- *Skills negotiation*
- *The ability to function effectively as a member of a group*

In making the transition to new regulations and standards, services will need to have a statement of philosophy that also identifies how the philosophy will be incorporated into the daily life of the service. The statement of principles will identify how the philosophy will be applied in day-to-day service delivery.

The statement of philosophy needs to relate to the following:

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/ Guidelines
55–56	7	All service policies and procedures should reflect the service's philosophy and statement of principles	My Time, Our Place

When developing a service philosophy, families, staff, children and the Approved Provider could consider:

- What is the purpose of our service?
- What are our values and beliefs about our service?
- What do we aim to provide?
- What community issues must we address?
- How do we get to know the children and families?
- What do we require of our staff and how can we support our staff?

*Reflect ... Think ... What do we do? ... Why do we do it that way?*

Each community will have its own way of undertaking this task. This may involve:

- holding community meetings or focus groups to brainstorm ideas
- using surveys and questionnaires
- speaking with individuals informally and noting their comments.

A process of consultation ensures that the end statement is 'owned' by the whole service community. It will be useful to record the process used to develop the philosophy statement.

## Example of a philosophy statement

The (Name) Out of School Hours Care Service is a child-focused service where:

- children, families and staff are treated as equal and valued individuals
- the value of play is paramount and children have opportunities for challenge and ongoing learning
- children are encouraged to develop to their full potential within a safe, caring and supportive environment that recognises the importance of families for children
- through a positive approach, children's behaviour is guided to build their confidence and self-esteem
- the service operates according to a stated philosophy and aims to reflect the local community by encouraging participation and discussion about all issues relevant to the running of the service.

Each point may be further refined by using practical examples of how this will be implemented, or develop a separate statement of principles that addresses each statement and identifies specific steps that the service will use in the day to day operations.

The philosophy needs to be regularly evaluated, reviewed and amended as required.

The service's philosophy should be displayed prominently where families, staff, children and visitors are regularly reminded of it. Statements from the philosophy can be used as a marketing tool.

## Resources/References

1. Education and Care National Law 2010 at [www.legislation.vic.gov.au](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au) (go to Victorian Statute Book and then to 2010)
2. Guide to the National Law and Regulations 2011 at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au) (go to publications)
3. My Time, Our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au) (go to publications)
4. Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au) (go to publications)
5. Guide to National Quality Standard at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au) (go to publications)
6. Developing a Service Philosophy, National Childcare Accreditation Council, Fact Sheet Number 9 at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au) (go to NCAC Archive)
7. Developing a Statement of Philosophy, Department for Education and Child Development at [www.earlyyears.sa.edu.au/a8\\_publish/modules/publish/content.asp](http://www.earlyyears.sa.edu.au/a8_publish/modules/publish/content.asp)
8. Kennedy A & Stonehouse A (2004) *Shared visions for Outside School Hours Care*. Nunawading, Victoria, Department of Human Services Victoria

# How to develop and review service policies and procedures

An OSHC service must have current and specific operational policies to meet the requirements of Regulation 168. The list of essential policies required can be found in Regulation 168 and at the beginning of this document. Individual services may choose to have other policies to meet site and community needs—this resource has included two additional specific policies to address risk assessment and confidentiality.

Policies are dynamic—they change with time and mirror current thinking, social values and service goals. All policies should be reviewed annually, even if there is no change required. The review date should be noted. As the policy is reviewed, it is essential that any changes to legislation, organisational policies and guidelines are referenced. Once policies are reviewed, the associated procedure must be checked and altered if required.

## Why have policies?

- Policies provide clear documentation that defines agreed and consistent ways of doing things to achieve the stated outcomes.
- Policies outline how the service operates to meet the needs of children, families, staff, management and community.
- Policies exist to meet legislative and organisational requirements.
- Policies underpin planning and decision making for the service and support effective management practices.

Policies should be regularly reviewed to meet changing needs and priorities. At all times, a service needs to keep up to date with:

- changes to legislation and government and organisational frameworks
- the service's responsibility to meet the changing and diverse needs of children, families, staff, management and community.

## What is included?

- Policies should use concise and clear statements that will prevent differing interpretations or expectations, and misunderstandings or conflict.
- Policies should include procedures that describe to stakeholders (particularly the users of the service) how each policy will be implemented. Procedures are the tools for carrying out the day-to-day work in accordance with the stated philosophy and policies of the service.
- All policies should be dated and include a projected review date.
- Policies should include references and links to legislation, standards and other key documentation such as organisational policy or industry guidelines.

## Who and what needs to be considered?

- Development of a policy should consider the impact on the needs of people and groups involved in the service, including children, families, staff, management, the Approved Provider and the local community.
- Development of a policy should consider the broader state or Australian government expectations about people's rights and responsibilities, including government policies and guidelines about funding, the National Quality Agenda, as well as a broad range of legal requirements determined by legislation, regulations and industrial awards.
- Policies must reflect the Statement of Philosophy of the service and the agreed ideals and aims.

## Who develops policies?

- All the service stakeholders have a role in developing and reviewing policies and should be included in consultation and given an opportunity to provide feedback. Stakeholders need to understand why policies are being developed.
- The Approved Provider has the responsibility of ensuring that policies are in place, and that they are up to date, appropriate, relevant and workable.
- Most often the task of developing policies will be delegated to a sub-committee.

### Process for developing and reviewing policies

1. Determine and write a philosophy
2. Identify and write outcomes
3. Identify and list broad policy areas
4. Identify considerations
5. Develop policy statements
6. Develop specific policies and procedures
7. Circulate new policies for feedback
8. Set a timeline for review and evaluation
9. Review, evaluate and consider feedback
10. Circulate and communicate to staff, families, children and community

## Who manages policies?

- Policies are the responsibility of the Approved Provider. They generally do not change frequently.
- Procedures are the tools for carrying out day-to-day work. These may require frequent modification.
- Policies should be reviewed and revised (if necessary) on a rotational basis, any changes must be ratified by the Approved Provider, and stakeholders should be advised of changes.
- The documentation should be well indexed and readily available to families and the staff.
- Policies should be stored in a way that enables amended or new policies to be added to the file easily.
- An electronic version of current policies and procedures should be maintained and previous policies kept as evidence of review.

# Policy template

This template can be used as a guide, if required.

- Aim to keep policies and procedures clear and concise.
- Ensure there is a master copy of policies (an electronic version) and that all copies that are held by the service/Approved Provider are updated as changes occur.

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

## Policy Title

- 1. Background**—Services may add some background information to underpin the policy statement and contextualise the policy and its procedures.
- 2. Policy statement**—This statement is a summary of the intent of the policy and should incorporate the intents and aims of the statement of philosophy.
- 3. Relationship**—This describes the policy’s relationship to Regulations, National Quality Standard, other service policies and legislation.
- 4. How the policy statement will be implemented**—This includes those specific policies and procedures required to meet the Regulations and Standards, and information that pertains specifically to each individual service so that the policy meets specific site or community needs. Clear roles and responsibilities are also outlined in this section.
- 5. Resources/References/Further reading**—This information will assist those developing policies, to ensure that information is relevant and up to date and based on recommended source material.

# Risk Assessment

(National Quality Standards 2 and 7)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

## Risk Assessment Policy

### 1 Background

The policy on risk assessment is not specifically identified by Regulation 168. However, risk assessment is required in several key aspects of service delivery and services will need to be able to demonstrate a familiarity with the process. It has been decided to prepare this as a stand-alone policy which, by nature of the requirements, does not fit easily into the prepared template.

With the implementation of the Regulations, there is a change in the adult to child ratio to be applied for excursions. Services must base the ratio on a risk assessment of each excursion. There remain very clear descriptions of adequate supervision (refer to the *Guide to Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Regulations 2011*). In short, the onus is on the Approved Provider and educators to ensure that every effort is applied to ensure that children are safe and to minimise risks.

There should be a regular risk assessment undertaken of emergency procedures. The application of a risk assessment process is valuable in any situation where there is some concern about an operational change, to assess the potential risks and determine how these can be most effectively minimised.

In summary, risk assessments:

- are a requirement of the National Quality Framework
- are best practice
- will minimise risks
- will provide documented evidence which may be used as defence in a court of law and assisting educators meet their duty of care responsibilities.

### 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service complies with the requirements of the National Quality Framework and undertakes risk assessments of excursions, emergency procedures and other situations of change (such as a temporary relocation).



### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/ Guidelines
168	2 & 7		OHS&W Act/Regulations
100–101		Excursions Policy	
97		Emergency and Evacuation Policy	
103–115		Child-safe Environment Policy	
173–177		Governance and Management Policy	

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 Description of risk assessment

- What is the **context** in which risk is to be assessed?
- **Identify the risks**—Brainstorm ideas and group under appropriate risk headings. Consider the effects on other people (staff, children and others), information, physical assets and finances, and reputation. Write the final list onto a table that is a risk assessment summary.
- **Analyse risks**—Determine the consequences and likelihood of each risk. Write these onto the table next to each risk. Consequences and likelihood could be described in the following way:

Consequences		Likelihood	
<i>Level</i>	<i>Descriptor</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Descriptor</i>
1	Insignificant	A	Almost certain
2	Minor	B	Likely
3	Moderate	C	Possible
4	Major	D	Unlikely
5	Catastrophic	E	Rare

- **Evaluate the risks**—Use the grid below to identify the level of risk. If you are not happy with the level of risk then proceed to the next step.

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5
A—almost certain	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
B—likely	High	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
C—possible	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme	Extreme
D—unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
E—rare	Low	Low	Moderate	High	High

- **Identify and evaluate risk controls**—Identify what happens already to manage the risks and consider how well these strategies are working (eg good, adequate, variable). How does this affect the level of risk? Fill these items in on the table. If you are not happy with the level of risk at this stage, proceed to the next step.
- **Further risk treatments and opportunities for improvement**—What actions are needed to bring risks to an acceptable level (these actions are incorporated into other planning processes and include responsibilities, resources and timelines)? What opportunities are there for improvement? Write these onto the table.
- **Communicate and consult, monitor and review**—Incorporate these actions throughout the whole process.
- **Review** the assessment on a regular basis.
- **File the documentation.**
- You can find a **template for risk assessment** in the references that follow.
- A template for recording the risk assessment

Note: According to the Regulations, a risk assessment is not required for an excursion if (1) the excursion is a regular outing and (2) a risk assessment has previously been conducted for the excursion.

***Be aware of the composition of the group of children participating in the excursion as it is unlikely that the same group dynamics will be in place from one excursion to the next. A second significant variable is the skills and experience of the educators and staff involved in an excursion.***

## 4.2 A risk assessment for an excursion must—

- Identify and assess risks that the excursion may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion; and
- Specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.

## 4.3 A risk assessment must consider—

- The proposed route and destination for the excursion; and
- Any water hazards; and
- The transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion; and
- The number of adults and children involved in the excursion; and
- The educator to child ratio required under the Law, and whether a higher ratio of educators or other responsible adults to children may be appropriate to provide supervision, given the risks posed by the excursion; and
- The proposed activities; and
- The likely length of time of the excursion; and
- The items that should be taken on the excursion (eg mobile phone and a list of emergency contact numbers).

## 5 Other considerations

In instances where there is uncertainty about the identified risks that arise from a risk assessment, seek the guidance of the Approved Provider. This could result in the Approved Provider (or nominee) countersigning the risk assessment.

## 6 Resources/References

1. Guide to Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) (the appendices of this document also present a template for Risk Assessment Forms)
2. Education and Care Services National Regulations under the Education and Care Services National Law—2011 at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)



# Health and Safety

(National Quality Standard 2)

1. **HEALTH AND SAFETY**, including matters relating to
  - (i) nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements
  - (ii) sun protection
  - (iii) water safety
  - (iv) administration of first aid
2. **INCIDENT, INJURY, TRAUMA AND ILLNESS**
3. **INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND INFESTATIONS**
4. **MEDICAL CONDITIONS**
5. **EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION**
6. **DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN**
7. **EXCURSIONS**
8. **CHILD-SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Nutrition Policy

## 1 Background

High quality nutritional food is essential for the proper growth and development of children. Providing a balanced and nutritional diet assists children to develop healthy eating strategies and practices that can set the foundation for a child’s future health and eating habits. OSHC services can play a significant role in helping children develop positive attitudes and habits for healthy eating. OSHC services also offer an ideal opportunity to offer instruction relating to food handling and hygiene.

The service must meet the requirements of the Australian Food Safety Standards and ensure that its educators are kept informed of the latest information. In addition, the service undertakes to ensure that educators have the opportunity to undertake Food Handling Training. Your local government office (council) monitors food safety and can assist with answers to questions.

## 2 Example policy statement

**The ..... OSHC service considers nutrition to be a vital component in the healthy development of children. The service uses the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents*, developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council, as a basis for the service’s policy and practices regarding nutrition.**

**We are compliant with the food handling practices contained in Australian Food Safety Standards.**

**Our educators and staff are asked to model best practice at all times.**

### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	2.2		Australian Food Safety Standards
77, 78, 79 & 80			Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia DECD Eat Well Rite Bite Healthy Eating Guidelines for South Australian Schools and Preschools

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 General

- Food and beverages are provided to children as part of the program and will be done so with reference to the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents*.
- Nutrition information, service policy and the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents* will be available for families at the service.
- Food and beverages provided are nutritious, varied and of a sufficient quantity to ensure children have an appropriate amount to meet their growth and developmental needs.
- Food and beverages supplied take into account the cultural, religious and health requirements of the children and families accessing the service.
- Children are encouraged to try new foods, but no child will be forced to eat something he/she does not like or which is inconsistent with his/her religious/cultural or dietary needs.
- Food will not be used as a punishment or reward.
- The service displays a weekly menu.
- Food and beverages are prepared and stored hygienically in accordance with the Australian Food Safety Standards.
- Educators discuss healthy eating and nutrition as part of the program.
- Drinking water is always available.
- Children are encouraged to wash hands before eating and observe the requirements of safe food handling.

## 4.2 Examples of service procedures

- Breakfast will be available between X.XX and X.XX am and will be provided by the service. It will always include a choice of wholegrain cereals and breads as well as fresh fruit.
- Recess (morning snack) will be available between X.XX and X.XX am. Morning snacks are to be provided by families.
- Lunch will available between X.XX and X.XX pm, depending on program activities.
- Lunch will be provided by families unless the program states otherwise, in which case a menu will be advertised on the Vacation Care program. Children who do not wish to eat the lunch the service provides on given days are to bring their own lunch.
- Afternoon tea will be available between X.XX and X.XX pm and be provided by the service. It will always include fresh fruit, vegetables and wholegrain carbohydrates.
- Children will be able to have additional fruit snacks.
- Families will be provided with the service’s nutrition policy as part of the family information package and through posters and pamphlets located prominently at the service.

## 5 Other considerations

- The service encourages families to provide food and beverages, complying with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents*, to their children for consumption at the service.
- It is recognised that, on occasion, food and beverages supplied at the service may diverge from the guidelines for special purposes and celebrations and that families will be advised of such occasions.
- The service focuses on a supply of fresh fruit and vegetables that are sourced locally wherever possible.
- Meal and snack times will be advertised and promoted as a time of social interaction.
- Children will be encouraged to participate in meal/snack preparation and clean-up activities as part of the service’s life skills focus.

## 6 Roles and responsibilities

### 6.1 The director will be responsible for—

- Ensuring that the service has an adequate supply of nutritious food and beverages.
- Ensuring that a weekly menu is planned and displayed.
- Ensuring the weekly menu, foods and beverages available at the service comply with the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents.
- Ensuring families have access to the latest information regarding healthy eating and nutrition.



## 6.2 All educators will be responsible for—

- Ensuring that drinking water is always available.
- Ensuring that meals and snacks are served at regular intervals.
- Ensuring that adequate quantities of food and beverages are available at meal and snack times.
- Actively taking opportunities to discuss healthy eating with children.
- Encouraging children to participate in meal and snack preparation and the associated clean-up activities.
- Modelling practice that reflects the service policy.
- Ensuring food and beverages are never used as a reward or punishment.
- Ensuring that all children who are hungry have access to food and beverages.
- Ensuring appropriate hygiene practices are maintained.
- Modelling healthy eating practices.

## 6.3 Families and children will be responsible for—

- Being familiar with the service policy and procedures.
- Complying with any specific requests made by the director and educators.
- Offering feedback and comments to assist the team to meet the needs of individual families.
- Checking with the staff team before sending food which will need preparation.

## 7 Resources/References

1. Australian Food Safety Standards at [www.foodstandards.gov.au/foodstandards/foodsafteystandards/australiaonly/](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/foodstandards/foodsafteystandards/australiaonly/)
2. DECD Eat Well Rite Bite Healthy Eating Guidelines for South Australian Schools and Preschools at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/eatwellsa/files/links/A4\\_pages\\_Right\\_Bite\\_screen.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/eatwellsa/files/links/A4_pages_Right_Bite_screen.pdf)
3. Eat Smart Play Smart, Heart Foundation at [www.heartfoundation.org.au](http://www.heartfoundation.org.au)
4. NCAC OSHCQA Factsheet #3 Food Safety at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) (go to NCAC archive)
5. Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia at [www.nhmrc.gov.au/files\\_nhmrc/publication/attachments/n34.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publication/attachments/n34.pdf)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Sun Protection Policy

## 1 Background

A balance of ultraviolet (UV) exposure is necessary for good health. Too little exposure results in a lack of vitamin D and too much exposure results in sunburn, eye damage and cancer. It is important for OSHC services to ensure that children and educators are exposed to the right balance of UV radiation to promote good health. Exposure to ultraviolet radiation is the method by which the human body makes vitamin D. This vitamin is vital for healthy bones, muscles, and teeth. It is necessary for regulating our immune systems, our hormones and our nervous system. Lack of vitamin D can result in some very serious illness, including diabetes, heart disease and cancer. An appropriate level of exposure to the sun is vital to maintain our health.

## 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service provides a balanced approach to ultraviolet radiation exposure. This approach will follow the current scientific advice on UV exposure and provide children and educators with the opportunity for safe and protective UV exposure related to the UV index and will be seasonal in nature.

The service will act to ensure the appropriate level of UV exposure by:

- Encouraging the use of sun-smart techniques as outlined in the Cancer Council SA Sun Smart policy.
- Accessing the current predicted UV index rating from May to August.
- Encouraging the use of a combination of sun protection strategies when the UV index is 3 and above.
- Encouraging safe levels of exposure when the UV index is below 3.
- Requiring educators to model good sun-safe practices.
- Encouraging children to take responsibility for their own sun protection.
- Providing an environment that allows children and educators to access areas of both sun and shade.
- Ensuring families, educators and staff are informed about the service's sun-smart policy.

### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	2.3		OHS&W Act/Regulations
114		Child-safe Environment Policy	
249 (2) Transitional arrangements for shade		Excursions Policy	
		Sun Protection Policy is included in both staff and family handbooks	

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 Shade and protection

- In South Australia, the months of highest UV radiation are from September to April. During these months and when the UV level is above 3, the service will follow protective practices and educators will model these at all times that are designated by the service.
- The service will be mindful of programmed outdoor activities that occur during the peak UV periods of the day and will endeavour to limit these activities or conduct them in shaded areas (ie shaded play or indoor swimming venues will be accessed where possible).

### 4.2 Appropriate sun-safe equipment that the service will promote

- It must be determined whether SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen will be provided by the service or the families. When it is provided by the service, families must be advised of the brand in case there are allergies to be considered.
- Hats need to be broad brimmed, legionnaire or bucket style. These must provide shade for the face and neck. Caps are not sufficient.
- Clothing should include collared shirts with covered shoulders, and longer style dresses. A close fitting t-shirt or similar should be worn for water activities.
- Children and educators will be encouraged to wear sunglasses.
- Children who do not have appropriate sun-safe clothing, hat or are unable or unwilling to wear sunscreen will be required to play in shaded areas only.

### 4.3 Safe exposure

- The service will aim to provide an appropriate level of sun exposure during the safest seasonal period, which in South Australia is between May and August and when the UV rating is below 3.
- An appropriate level of sun exposure varies depending on skin type, day to day activity, and UV rating.
- The service recognises that children may have had some exposure during the school day and educators should check the Cancer Council of South Australia's current recommendations for exposure.

## 5 Roles and responsibilities

### 5.1 For sun protection, the director and educators will—

- Ensure that the service has an SPF 30+ broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen and that it is within its use-by date.
- Model effective sun protection strategies by always wearing a sun-safe hat when outside in accordance with the service policy, by wearing protective clothing and sunglasses, by using an SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen, and by seeking shade whenever possible.
- Support younger children and encourage older children to appropriately apply an SPF 30+ sunscreen before going outdoors. Families will be advised of this practice in the family handbook.
- Ensure that all children wear a sun-safe hat when outside, as per the policy.
- Ensure that all children wear appropriate sun-safe clothing.
- Encourage children to wear sunglasses if available.
- Encourage children to access shaded areas for outdoor play.
- Ensure that children who do not have appropriate sun-safe clothing and hat or are unable or unwilling to wear sunscreen will be required to play in shaded areas only.
- Assist and encourage children to appropriately apply an SPF 30+ water resistant sunscreen 30 minutes before entering the water and reapply it according to the product's instructions.
- Take every opportunity to discuss 'sun smart' procedures with children.

### 5.2 For safe exposure, the director and educators will—

- Check the current UV rating to ensure it is under 3.
- Model appropriate exposure to UV during the months of May to August and when the UV rating is below 3.
- Be required to wear sun protective equipment.
- Be vigilant and guide the children to use sun protective equipment.
- Discuss 'sun smart' procedures with children.

### 5.3 Families and children will—

- Be encouraged to become familiar with the policy requirements and support the educators by dressing appropriately for the conditions, including wearing a hat.

## 7 Resources/References

1. Cancer Council of SA Sun Smart OSHC and Vacation Care Checklist at [www.sunsmart.com.au/protecting\\_others/at\\_school/out\\_of\\_school\\_hours\\_care\\_services](http://www.sunsmart.com.au/protecting_others/at_school/out_of_school_hours_care_services)
2. Cancer Council of SA for general information and resources at [www.cancersa.org.au](http://www.cancersa.org.au)
3. SA OHS&W Regulations 2010 at [www.safework.sa.gov.au/search/google\\_search.jsp?q=sun+protection+](http://www.safework.sa.gov.au/search/google_search.jsp?q=sun+protection+)
4. DECD Hat Wearing Guidelines for Policy Development at [www.decd.gov.au/policiesa-z](http://www.decd.gov.au/policiesa-z)
5. Shade Structure, DECD Asset Policy and Capital Programs Protocol SE006 at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ShadeStructures.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ShadeStructures.pdf)
6. Sample Skin Protection Policy at [www.cancersa.org.au/cms\\_resources/sunsmart/ECH/Sample\\_policy\\_09.pdf](http://www.cancersa.org.au/cms_resources/sunsmart/ECH/Sample_policy_09.pdf)
7. DECD Hot Weather Policy (schools) at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/SchoolTermsVacationsClosu.doc](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/SchoolTermsVacationsClosu.doc)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Water Safety Policy

## 1 Background

Water activities are a significant part of Australian life and provide children with opportunities to access a variety of activities for experience, learning and fun. However, all bodies of water present a significant hazard and require service educators to ensure increased vigilance around them to ensure the safety of children. It is acknowledged that children can drown in as little as 5cm of water.

The Regulations do not specify a specific educator to child ratio for activities where water is a feature. The number of educators present is to be determined by a risk assessment of the proposed activity. It must also be noted that in sections 165, 167 and 169 of the National Law there are clear statements about adequate supervision. The adequacy of supervision shall be determined by a range of factors that include:

- numbers, ages and abilities of the children
- number and positioning of educators
- each child's current activity
- areas where children are playing, in particular the visibility and accessibility of these areas
- risks in the environment and experiences provided to children
- educators' knowledge of each child and each group of children
- the experience, knowledge and skill of each educator.

### ***Definition of a body of water***

The service recognises the following locations are bodies of water:

- swimming pools
- wading pools
- lakes
- ponds
- the sea
- creeks
- dams
- rivers
- equipment used by the service that could contain 5cm or more of water and would allow a child to submerge both nose and mouth at the same time.

## 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service recognises the risks posed by bodies of water and takes the safety of children and educators involved in water-based activities and around bodies of water seriously. The service will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children are able to enjoy water-based activities safely. Risk assessments will be carried out for programmed water-based activities and the outcomes will underpin the educator to child ratio for the activities.

## 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	2.3	Risk Assessment Policy	Camps and Excursions Guidelines
101 (2)b		Sun Protection Policy Excursions Policy Child-safe Environment Policy	Where preschool age children are present, services should refer to the DECD Water Safety Procedures for Preschools

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 General

The service shall ensure the safety of children around bodies of water by:

- Undertaking a risk assessment that will determine the required educator to child ratio for the proposed activity.
- Ensuring there are educators present that have a current, approved first aid qualification including CPR.
- Demonstrating a preference for venues that provide additional supervision in the form of life guards.
- Ensuring educators are placed in positions that allow them to directly and actively supervise any child accessing a body of water.
- Avoiding any venue with a body of water where sufficient precautions can not be taken to ensure the safety of children.

## 5 Roles and responsibilities

### 5.1 The director is responsible for—

- Actively looking for venues that provide additional supervision in the form of life guards, when the venue contains or has access to a body of water.
- Conducting a risk assessment on any venue the service plans to visit, to ensure that the service is able to provide appropriate levels of supervision and that the risk does not exceed the service's ability to maintain the safety of children.
- Ensuring a risk assessment is carried out on any activity the service sets up that allows children to access a body of water.
- Ensuring educators position themselves in the environment so that every child is within sight of an adult at all times and that supervision is direct and vigilant; and that educators rotate their position in the environment on a regular basis to allow for movement and to maintain vigilance.
- On a swimming excursion, having some educators designated to supervise children from within the body of water.

## 6 Resources/References

1. Camps and Excursions Guidelines at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/policiesa-z](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policiesa-z)
2. Water Safety Procedure for Preschools at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/policiesa-z](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policiesa-z)
3. Royal Life Saving fact sheets at [www.royallifesaving.com.au/www/html/156-fact-sheets.asp](http://www.royallifesaving.com.au/www/html/156-fact-sheets.asp)



Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Administration of First Aid Policy

## 1 Background

OSHC services have a responsibility to act to protect the safety and wellbeing of the children, educators and staff who access the service. Regulation 136 refers to first aid qualifications. To view the approved list, go to [www.acecqa.gov.au/qualifications/approved-first-aid-qualifications/](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/qualifications/approved-first-aid-qualifications/).

Approved Providers should consider whether or not they aim to have all educators gain and maintain an approved first aid qualification. It may be decided that all certified supervisors have the required qualifications. It is wise to determine who will bear the cost of required updates for these qualifications.

It is recommended that the Approved Provider and the director discuss and agree on all aspects of this policy.

## 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service recognises that a first aid response to children or adults suffering from a physical, emotional or psychological condition is a matter of priority and so we will act to ensure all possible assistance is rendered in accordance with state and national legislation. Educators will have the required qualifications and there will be trained staff present at all times. We will address the administration of first aid by:

- Ensuring that the service meets the Education and Care Services National Regulations and the standards provided in SafeWork SA Approved Code of Practice for First Aid in the Workplace.
- Ensuring that current and up to date information on applicable legislation regarding first aid is held at the service.
- Ensuring that educators employed at the service have and maintain appropriate qualifications in the delivery of first aid, and management of anaphylaxis and asthma.
- Ensuring that all educators have access to training to maintain and update their first aid qualifications.
- Ensuring that the first aid equipment held at the service meets the regulations as outlined in the SafeWork SA Approved Code of Practice for First Aid in the Workplace and that any specific equipment is also suitable for use with children.
- Ensuring Material Safety Data Sheets are held at the service for all chemicals accessible at the service.

### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	2.1, 2.3		
First Aid Kits: Reg 89 (1) a, b & c		Child-safe Environment Policy	SafeWork SA—Approved Code of Practice for First Aid in the Workplace
136, 161, 245, 246, 247		Excursions Policy	Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 2010 SafeWork SA

### 4 The policy must address the following areas

#### 4.1 General

- At all times, there are educators on duty who hold an approved first aid qualification (that includes current anaphylaxis and asthma management training).
- The service holds a copy of certificates in the educator’s file.
- In all instances, the priority of the educator will be the administration of appropriate and prompt first aid as required, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children, educators and staff at the service.
- In the event that a child is injured or falls ill during the session, the designated first aider will determine if the child is too unwell to remain at the service. The child will be removed to a quiet area if possible. The designated first aider will contact the family or their emergency contacts to advise of the nature of the illness and that someone needs to collect the child. The designated first aider will inform the child of the family’s estimated time of arrival and will remain with the child until the family member arrives.
- In the event of a serious injury or illness, the designated first aider will provide first aid and, if necessary, arrange ambulance transport to the appropriate hospital, as deemed necessary or as indicated in a child’s care plan (eg for diabetes).
- In the event of a serious injury or illness, the designated first aider will ensure that an educator contacts the family/guardian as soon as practicable, to notify them of the incident and ongoing events.
- In the event that a child needs to be transported in an ambulance:
  - If the educator is able to contact the family or emergency contacts and they are able to meet the child at the ambulance’s destination immediately, the educator will ensure that all medical information held at the service is provided to ambulance officers, record the destination and contact details of the ambulance and pass this information on to the family as soon as practicable.
  - If the educator is unable to contact any of the emergency contacts for the child, or a family member or the child’s emergency contacts are unable to immediately meet the child at the ambulance’s destination, an educator will be required to travel in the ambulance to the hospital with the child, along with the child’s enrolment and medical information that is held at the service.

- a) The travelling educator will continue to try to contact the emergency contacts until someone can be reached.
  - b) The travelling educator will remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives to support the child.
  - c) The remaining educators at the service will contact an emergency educator to come to the service to ensure that required educator to child ratios are restored as soon as practicable.
  - d) The service will cover the cost of transport for the travelling educator to return to the service.
- Staff have a duty of care to call in an ambulance in an emergency: this would include instances where a child's health was at risk due to parental delay in collecting the child.
  - Staff have a duty of care responsibility to provide first aid and seek emergency support if appropriate: it is the parent's responsibility to follow up medical care and seek advice from a doctor for non emergency conditions (if a parent continues to be unavailable to collect his/her child when the child is unwell, and does not provide alternative emergency contact details, some services may consider making a notification as the child's wellbeing is at risk when it is an ongoing concern).
  - Injured or unwell children will not be transported by staff using a personal vehicle except when paramedics instruct the staff to transport a child to meet an ambulance.

## 4.2 First aid documentation

- Minor incidents are to be documented in the accident register, a note is to be placed in the notes column of the day sheet to alert a collecting parent/guardian that there has been an incident, that they will need to speak to the designated first aider regarding the incident, and that the register will need to be signed.
- **For services on DECD school sites**, an injury incident relates to DECD employees and non-DECD persons such as OSHC staff, parents, volunteers and children. The injury incident form is called an ED 155. When a child is injured, only forward an ED 155 form to the school where professional medical treatment was administered. ED 155 forms are available at [www.decs.sa.gov.au/ohs/pages/injuryprevention/forms/](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/ohs/pages/injuryprevention/forms/). For assistance, phone **8226 1360**.
- **Other providers** must provide the appropriate form to educators and ensure that the required steps to be taken are fully documented.

### 4.3 First aid kit

- The location of the first aid kit is described clearly.
- The location of the first aid bum bags is described clearly. The first aid kit and bum bags will be accessible to children.
- The location of the first aid manual is described clearly.
- The first aid bum bags contain only a limited supply of equipment and, as such, are to be used only when outside.
- In the event of an emergency that exceeds the supplies available at the service, the designated first aider may access the first aid supplies held in the first aid room in the school. Any first aid supplies utilised from the school must be replaced by the service as a matter of priority.
- The director must also ensure:
  - the contents of first aid kits comply with the standards as listed in SafeWork SA Approved Code of Practice for First Aid in the Workplace
  - accurate Material Safety Data Sheets are available to the designated first aider
  - sufficient first aid supplies are held at the service at all times
  - first aid kits are checked each month to ensure supplies are within use-by dates and that the contents of all first aid kits meet the minimum standard as listed in the Approved Code of Practice for First Aid in the Workplace. A list of the required contents will be kept in the lid of the first aid kit for easy reference
  - the first aid kit, policies and procedures are kept current to industry standard
  - the current and accurate contact details for an appropriate hospital and other emergency contact information, including the Poisons Hotline, is displayed next to the phone in the OSHC office and is stored in the OSHC mobile phone.

## 5 Considerations for instances where there is a single educator

- The educator will call in an emergency educator who will take over responsibility for the children remaining at the service, whilst the educator travels in the ambulance with the child if necessary.
- In the event that an emergency educator is unable to attend the service or unable to reach the service before the ambulance leaves, the educator will ensure that the injured/ill child is safely in the care of medical personnel and will remain at the service. The educator will document the destination of the ambulance, the contact details of the destination and will ensure that all medical information held at the service is handed to the ambulance officers.

## 6 Roles and responsibilities

### 6.1 The director will—

- Ensure that all first aid qualifications of educators are current, including anaphylaxis and asthma training, and that documentation is kept on file.
- Determine the designated first aider for the shift. This person will be responsible for the administration of all first aid during that shift. In the event that the number of people requiring first aid exceeds the ability of the designated first aider for the shift, or is of a serious nature requiring the attention of two first aiders, a second educator will be required to assist with the administration of first aid.
- Ensure that the designated first aider is responsible for documenting all first aid given, that it is administered appropriately, and that families are made aware of any incident.
- Ensure that the designated first aider checks the contents of the first aid kits after each use to ensure sufficient supplies remain in the kits. The need for any additional supplies should be reported to the director.

## 7 Resources/References

- First Aid in Education and Children’s Services at [www.chess.sa.edu.au/Pathways/firstaidbook09.pdf](http://www.chess.sa.edu.au/Pathways/firstaidbook09.pdf)
- First Aid Flow Charts at [www.chess.sa.edu.au/Pathways/flowcharts.pdf](http://www.chess.sa.edu.au/Pathways/flowcharts.pdf)
- Health Support Planning in Education and Children’s Services at [www.chess.sa.edu.au/Pathways/HSPbookinfull09.pdf](http://www.chess.sa.edu.au/Pathways/HSPbookinfull09.pdf)
- DECD First Aid webpage (resources, training and guidelines) at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/health/firstaid/](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/health/firstaid/)
- Children’s Services Award 2010 (or the relevant Award that the service uses) at [www.fwa.gov.au/documents/modern\\_awards/award/ma000120/default.htm](http://www.fwa.gov.au/documents/modern_awards/award/ma000120/default.htm)
- Approved Code of Practice for First Aid in the Workplace—SafeWork SA at [www.safework.sa.gov.au/uploaded\\_files/FirstAidCodeofPractice.pdf](http://www.safework.sa.gov.au/uploaded_files/FirstAidCodeofPractice.pdf)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy

## 1 Background

In accordance with Education and Care Services National Regulations, the Approved Provider must ensure that incident, injury, trauma and illness occurrences are addressed, reported and recorded appropriately.

### Definition of serious incidents

The service recognises the following as serious incidents:

- the death of a child while either at the service or as a result of an incident that occurred at the service
- any incident involving injury or physical or emotional trauma to a child, or illness of a child that results or should have resulted in the child seeing a medical practitioner or attending hospital
- any incident where the attendance of emergency services was, or should have been, sought.

DECD lists severe or serious injuries as:

- head injuries
- eye injuries
- back injuries
- loss of limbs or appendages
- bone fractures
- deep wounds requiring suturing
- muscular injuries (more serious ones)
- burns
- ear injuries
- other injuries where complications have set in after the initial injuries are sustained.

The service also recognises a serious incident when a child is missing or cannot be accounted for, appears to have been taken or removed from the premises in a manner that contravenes Regulations or is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the service or any other part of the premises.

## 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service management of risks of incident, injury, trauma and illness will be a priority. The Approved Provider, in conjunction with the director, educators and staff will ensure that all procedures of the service are compliant with Regulations and the Law.

## 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	2.1	Medical Conditions Policy Infectious Diseases and Infestations Policy Emergency and Evacuation Policy Child-safe Environment Policy Risk Assessment Policy Excursions Policy Water Safety Policy	Health Support Planning in Education and Children's Services (condition-specific guidelines available at <a href="http://www.chess.sa.edu">www.chess.sa.edu</a> (go to A-Z Index)
First Aid Kits: 89 (1) a, b & c			Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 2010
12 85, 86, 87 176 (2) (a) (ii)			

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 Notice of serious incidents

For the purposes of section 174 (4) of the Law, the notice to the Regulatory Authority under section 174 (2)(a) of the Law, notice must be provided:

- within 24 hours or when the person becomes aware of the death of a child
- within 24 hours or when the person becomes aware of any other serious incident.

The service must also ensure the family of a child involved in a serious incident is notified as soon as practicable.

#### ***Other reporting***

The Catholic Education Office and DECD each have an online incident reporting system that must be used to record serious incidents.

In addition, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations requires notification of serious incidents if the service receives funding through the Community Support Programs (ie set-up assistance or a sustainability grant).

### 4.2 Incident, injury, trauma and illness records

In accordance with Regulations, a service must keep a written record of any incident, injury, trauma or illness a child suffers while in care, or as a result of being in care. This record must include:

- the name and age of the child
- the circumstances leading up to the incident or the child becoming ill
- any products or structures involved or circumstances surrounding the illness
- the time and date the incident occurred or illness began
- actions taken by staff to care for the child
- any medication that was given
- any medical personnel who were contacted
- details of anyone who witnessed the incident
- the name, time and date of the person/persons who were notified about the incident or illness by the service
- the name and signature of the person filling out the form and the date and time it was signed.



## 5 Resources/References

1. DECD Injury/Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure IRMS Update April 2010 at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/InjuryIncidentInvestigati.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/InjuryIncidentInvestigati.pdf)
2. DECD Accidents to Children, Students or Visitors May 2011 at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/AccidentstoChildrenStuden.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/AccidentstoChildrenStuden.pdf)
3. Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide's online Catholic Safety, Health and Welfare SA Incident Reporting Software Trainer at [www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/CatholicHealthSafetyandWelfareSA/media/files/3501.pdf](http://www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/CatholicHealthSafetyandWelfareSA/media/files/3501.pdf)
4. DECD Bush Fire Risk Management Strategy at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/MossBushfireRiskManagemen.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/MossBushfireRiskManagemen.pdf)
5. Sample injury, illness and trauma record at the back of the Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care National Regulations 2011

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Infectious Diseases and Infestations Policy

## 1 Background

OSHC services provide an opportunity for the spread of infectious diseases and infestations and so must take steps to prevent transmission through the OSHC community and on to the wider community. Whilst it is acknowledged that it is not possible to prevent all infectious diseases and infestations, OSHC services have a responsibility and legal obligation to take action to help prevent the spread.

When an outbreak of head lice or other transmittable infestation occurs, the service will follow procedures as for infectious diseases. It is not required that this is reported to the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board of South Australia but similar actions need to be taken.

## 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service follows the guidelines for prevention of infectious diseases as outlined in the document *Staying healthy in child care. Preventing infectious diseases in child care* (National Health and Medical Research Council). Children suffering from infectious diseases will be excluded from OSHC for the length of time specified or on the written advice from the child's medical practitioner.

### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	2.1	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy	Health Support Planning in Education and Children's Services Staying Healthy in Child Care
88		Nutrition Policy	
		Administration of First Aid Policy	
		Enrolment form	

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 General

The service will act to prevent the spread of infectious diseases/infestations by:

- Ensuring current information about infectious diseases is held at the service.
- Providing information to families regarding infectious diseases and exclusion from the service as part of the family information pack.
- Providing appropriate hand washing facilities and supplies (as outlined in the Nutrition Policy).
- Encouraging effective hand washing techniques.
- Providing appropriate first aid supplies (as outlined in the Administration of First Aid Policy).
- Excluding children from the service who are suffering from an infectious disease (as per the guidelines in Staying Healthy in Child Care).
- Notifying families when an infectious disease has occurred at the service.
- Providing information about immunisation.

## 5 The Director is responsible for—

- Ensuring that the services practices and procedures minimise the spread of infection/infestation by:
  - regularly disinfecting and cleaning all equipment.
  - ensuring that there is no sharing of drinking/eating utensils.
  - (in the case of head lice) removing soft furnishings (bean bags), washing the 'dress ups' and restricting access to them until the immediate risk passes.
- Ensuring the service holds information on specific diseases and exclusion periods and this information is available to educators and families; and that the *Staying Healthy in Child Care* document and posters are accessible to educators at all times.
- Ensuring the service's documents are all current and available.
- Ensuring that any updates to the documents are made available to all educators in a timely fashion.
- Ensuring that information regarding the service's policy on exclusion of children with infectious diseases is made available to families in the family information pack, along with the recommendation that families keep children who are unwell at home.

## 5.1 Head lice

In the event that a child is suspected of being infested with head lice:

- Parents will be notified as soon as possible (at least by the end of the day) and provided with information about treatment options.
- Information is available in *Staying Healthy in Child Care*, 'You've Got What?', and pamphlets available from the Department of Health and Ageing on [www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/branches/headlice/headlice-index.htm](http://www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/branches/headlice/headlice-index.htm).
- The parents need to be informed that the child will only be readmitted to care after approved and appropriate treatment has been administered.
- Isolation of children with head lice is not considered necessary. Educators will engage the group in activities that minimise head to head contact.
- Other families will be advised when there is an infestation of head lice within the service (eg notes in bags or poster on the door).

## 5.2 Infectious diseases

In the event that an educator suspects that a child arriving at the service is suffering from an infectious disease:

- The educator will approach the director for a second opinion.
- If the director also suspects the child is suffering from an infectious disease, he/she will advise the person signing in the child that the child is suspected of suffering from an infectious disease and request that the child be removed from the service until a medical practitioner has determined that
  - the child is not suffering from an infectious disease
  - the child has completed the applicable exclusion period as outlined in the current edition of *Staying Healthy in Child Care*.

In the event that an educator suspects that a child in attendance at the service is suffering from an infectious disease:

- The child will be withdrawn from the main group and taken to a separate area, where the educator will further assess the child's current health condition and maintain surveillance whilst making the child comfortable.
- The educator will refer to *Staying Healthy in Child Care* for details on symptoms the child is presenting with (but will not officially make a diagnosis, but can however present the symptoms to the family and indicate that other children with similar symptoms have been diagnosed with a similar condition).
- An educator will contact the family or, if unsuccessful, the emergency contacts in order of priority and advise the emergency contact of the child's condition and request that the emergency contact make immediate arrangements to collect the child from the service.
- In an event where the child does not have to be collected immediately, precautions as described in *Staying Healthy in Child Care* will be implemented.

In the event that a child with an infectious disease has been in attendance at the service, the director will:

- ensure that the families of children in attendance that day, or any other previous day the child has attended and may have been infectious, are notified as soon as practicable. Confidentiality will be maintained and only the name and nature of the infectious disease will be disclosed (see Confidentiality Policy)
- ensure that information regarding the infectious disease is available to families
- ensure information regarding the occurrence and nature of the infectious disease is prominently displayed next to the day sheet
- ensure that documentation regarding the infectious disease and the actions taken by the service comply with Regulations.

The service will make information on immunisation available to families. Posters will be displayed prominently and additional information will be available via the *Staying Healthy in Child Care* document.

## 7 Resources/References

1. Staying Healthy in Child Care—Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care. Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council, at [www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ch43](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ch43)
2. You've Got What?, Government of South Australia Department of Health at [www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/youve-got-what.htm](http://www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/youve-got-what.htm)
3. Health Support Planning at [www.chess.sa.edu.au/Pathways/HSPbookinfull09.pdf](http://www.chess.sa.edu.au/Pathways/HSPbookinfull09.pdf)
4. Wash, Wipe, Cover (Health SA) at [www.publications.health.sa.gov.au](http://www.publications.health.sa.gov.au)
5. Department of Health guidelines for managing head lice at [www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/branches/headlice/headlice-index.htm](http://www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/branches/headlice/headlice-index.htm)
6. NCAC OSHCQA Fact Sheet #17 Children's Hygiene at [www.acecqu.gov.au](http://www.acecqu.gov.au) (go to NCAC archive)
7. SA Health Communicable Disease Control Branch at [www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/communicable-diseases-index.htm](http://www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/communicable-diseases-index.htm)
8. SA Health List of Notifiable Diseases at [www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/PDF-files/1203-notifiable-disease-list.pdf](http://www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/PDF-files/1203-notifiable-disease-list.pdf)
9. SA Health Report of Notifiable Disease or Related Death at [www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/PDF-files/2008-case-reporting-form.pdf](http://www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/PDF-files/2008-case-reporting-form.pdf)
10. DECD Infection Control website at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/default.asp?navgrp=health&=infection](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/default.asp?navgrp=health&=infection)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

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# Medical Conditions Policy

## 1 Background

Children who attend OSHC services are frequently able to self-medicate and manage medical conditions and, where possible, carers should encourage and support this. Effective management of medical conditions is heavily reliant on good communication with families. Services have a responsibility to share information with families in relation to medication. The Approved Provider must determine the service policy and procedures in relation to medical conditions and medication. *Health Support Planning in Education and Children's Services* is a reference point and educators must undertake only those procedures and support for which they have current training.

## 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service staff will assist children to manage medical conditions and assist with medication if that medication is prescribed by a doctor and has the original label detailing the child's name, required dosage and storage requirements and is accompanied by a medication plan.

## 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	2.1		
90–96 162		Enrolment form	Health Support Planning in Education and Children's Services
		Excursions Policy	

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 Medical conditions

Medical conditions include asthma, diabetes and the diagnosis of a child at risk of anaphylaxis. This information should be included on the enrolment form and discussed as part of the enrolment interview with the family. The service should receive a medical management plan to ensure that the educators and other staff are informed of the required procedures and understand that the plan must be followed by providing regular interventions as detailed (eg blood glucose monitoring) or emergency first aid as described in the event of an incident involving the child.

Services will:

- Set up a process for informing all staff (including volunteers) of the needs of the individual children and the agreed management practice. This must be done in a way that protects the rights and dignity of the child.
- Undertake a risk assessment to identify what will be needed to support the inclusion of children with medical conditions. Family input should be sought.
- Implement identified strategies and processes to support children with identified health care needs.
- Implement practices to ensure that families are kept fully informed.

### 4.2 Medication

The director is responsible for all medication on site regardless of whether it is administered by educators or parents or self-administered by the child.

Where medication is required for the treatment of long-term conditions or complaints such as asthma, epilepsy or ADHD, the service will require a letter from the child's medical practitioner or specialist detailing the medical condition of the child, the correct dosage and how the condition is to be managed. This can be requested for over-the-counter medication as well as prescription only medication. If a medication authority is not provided, staff should have written instructions from the parent/guardian (recommended in cases of short-term medication only). In all cases, the instructions must match those on the pharmacy label.

If children are receiving medication at home but not at the service, the service should be advised on the nature of the medication, its purpose and of any possible side effects it may have on the child.

Medication management strategies need to include plans for excursions and other off-site activities, for example, who is going to organise and manage the medication.

#### **Storage**

- When educators are to assist with a child's medication, the medication should be given directly to the director, not left in the child's bag or locker.
- Medications must be stored strictly in accordance with product instructions (paying particular note to temperature) and in the original container in which dispensed. Some families supply thermal carry packs to maintain safe temperature storage and for ease of transport on excursions.
- Medication must be within the expiry date and delivered to educators as a daily supply (or a week's supply at the most). This might require the family to organise a separate labelled container from the pharmacy for safe storage at home.
- Storage should be secure with clear labelling and access limited to the educators responsible for medication storage and supervision.

## **Supervision of medication**

Everyone supervising medication needs to ensure that:

- the right child
- has the right medication
- and the right dose
- by the right route (eg oral or inhaled)
- at the right time, and that they
- record the details on the service's Request to Administer Prescribed Medication Form.

- A child should not take his/her first dose of a new medication while attending the service. The child should be supervised by the family or a health professional in case of an allergic reaction.
- In South Australia, medication for the treatment of an asthma emergency by a bronchodilator (eg Ventolin) via a puffer can be administered without written authority. The use of a bronchodilator is considered a standard first aid response. Educators must be trained in asthma emergency first aid before administering a bronchodilator (eg Ventolin) via a puffer.
- In South Australia, the use of an adrenaline auto injector for the treatment of an anaphylaxis emergency requires an anaphylaxis plan and a prescribed auto injector. Educators must be trained in emergency anaphylaxis first aid before administering adrenaline via an auto injector.
- It is strongly recommended that staff administering medication undertake medication management training. Go to [www.chess.edu.au/Training/Traininghome.htm](http://www.chess.edu.au/Training/Traininghome.htm) for more information.

## **Self-management of medication**

Services should have an explicit procedure about medication carried and self-managed by children. This should include:

- The provision of a written medication authority (and clear direction from the family and doctor that the child is able to self-manage).
- The requirement that medication be in the original pharmacy labelled container.
- The medication is stored according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Limitations on the quantity brought to the service (daily requirement preferred).
- The option for the service to stop children storing their own medication should there be any concern about the safety of the individual or others on the site.
- An understanding that if staff members observe a child apparently self-medicating, they can sensitively and privately ask to see the original pharmacy container and check with the parent/guardian.
- The responsibility of all people on the site to respect others' medication and to keep one's own medication secure to minimise risk to others.

## **Medication error**

If a child takes the wrong medication, the wrong amount of medication, or takes medication via the wrong route, the following steps should be followed:

- Ring the Poisons Information Centre 13 1126 and give details of the incident and child.
- Act immediately upon the advice given (eg if advised to call an ambulance) and notify the child's emergency contact person.
- Document your actions.
- Generally, the employer will require completion of a critical incident report and an accident and injury report form.



### 4.3 Allergies

Where a child has a known allergy, it should be recorded on the enrolment form and all staff made aware of it. Where an allergy requires specific medication or treatment, there must be a current medication plan for the child in accordance with the requirements set out in the *Health Support Planning in Education and Children's Services*.

It is the responsibility of services to minimise the risk of exposure to an allergen. Food-safe practices need to address any identified food allergies.

## 5 Resources/References

It is imperative that educators/staff are fully aware of the content of the Regulations and National Law pertaining to this policy.

1. Health Support Planning in Education and Children's Services at [www.chess.sa.edu.au/Pathways/HSPbookinfull09.pdf](http://www.chess.sa.edu.au/Pathways/HSPbookinfull09.pdf)
2. DECD Child Health and Education Support Services A – Z Health Support Index (information on care plans, guidelines and condition specific resources) at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/health/chessPathways](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/health/chessPathways)
3. DECD Anaphylaxis Guidelines for schools at [www.decd.gov.au/A-zpolicies](http://www.decd.gov.au/A-zpolicies)
4. DECD Anaphylaxis web page at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/health/allergyAndAnaphylaxis/](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/health/allergyAndAnaphylaxis/)
5. ASCIA Guidelines for Prevention of Food Anaphylactic Reactions in Schools, Preschools and Childcare at [www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/papers/prevent-anaphylactic-reactions-in-schools](http://www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/papers/prevent-anaphylactic-reactions-in-schools)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Emergency and Evacuation Policy

## 1 Background

According to the National Law (Regulation 97), services must have policies and procedures which set out what must be done in an emergency and to have an emergency and evacuation floor plan that is displayed in a prominent position. Emergencies can include:

- cyclone
- flood
- fire or bushfire
- the presence of dangerous animals or insects
- other situations that require a lockdown to be implemented
- a situation that requires the evacuation of the premises.

However, an emergency may also include an accident or sudden illness that requires the immediate response of educators. It might include an asthma attack, a seizure or an anaphylactic reaction.

Approved Providers must ensure that OSHC services are included with all other aspects of the site emergency procedures. There must be close links and liaison between the Approved Provider and service educators and staff to ensure consistency.

## 2 Example policy statement

**The ..... OSHC service considers the safety of our families, children and educators is paramount. Pivotal to our overall safety procedures is the management of emergency situations. Our procedures are tested and reviewed a minimum of once each school term.**

Also included can be statements to address the following:

- lockdown procedures
- bushfires.

### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	2	Risk Assessment Policy	
97 & 98		Excursions Policy	OHS&W Act/Regulations
		Family and educators/ staff handbooks	DECD Bushfires Strategy for 2011–12
		Approved Providers emergency procedures	

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 Evacuation

- Emergency evacuation procedures (including a floor plan) will be clearly displayed near the main entrance and exit of each room used by the OSHC service, and are to be followed in the event of fire, natural disaster or other emergency. In preparing these procedures, a risk assessment must be undertaken to identify the potential emergencies that are relevant to the service.
- There are clear instructions for what steps will be taken by the director, educators, staff and volunteers in case of emergency.
- The evacuation plan will include:
  1. a safe assembly area, with its own escape route, away from access areas for emergency services and the building; where relevant and practical, use the same assembly areas as the school
  2. an alarm/siren or other method to give notice of an emergency
  3. a second assembly area in the event that the first assembly area becomes unsafe
  4. unobstructed routes for leaving the building, which are suitable to the ages and abilities of the children (special consideration must be given to the evacuation of children with disabilities)
  5. an emergency pack stored away from the building, including items such as blankets, first aid kit and so on
  6. a person nominated to collect the attendance roll and families' emergency contact numbers and, at the assembly area, check the roll to ensure that all children, educators and other staff are present
  7. a list of current emergency services contact numbers and a person nominated to phone the relevant emergency service
  8. a person nominated to check that the building is empty and, if safe to do so, check that all doors and windows are closed to contain the spread of fire
  9. a person nominated to supervise the children at the assembly area. When the emergency services personnel arrive, the director will inform the officer in charge of the nature and location of the emergency, and of any missing children, educators or other staff.

- No-one will re-enter the building until advised it is safe to do so by the officer in charge of the emergency service.
- Fire extinguishers will be installed and maintained in accordance with Australian Standard 2444. Educators will be instructed in their operation. Educators will attempt to extinguish fires only when:
  - a fire is burning in the exit and is preventing the safe evacuation of the children and staff
  - the children have been evacuated from the room
  - the fire is small
  - there is no danger to the person operating the extinguisher and the person is well trained and confident in its use.
- Services will have a fire blanket, ensure that appropriate and functioning smoke detectors are installed and that there is a residual current device fitted.
- Safety and evacuation drills involving educators and children will be practised in before school care and after school care at least once a term, and at least once during each vacation care program, when most children are present.

## 4.2 Lockdown

Services must develop strategies to bring children indoors if there is a serious risk to their safety outdoors. Many of the strategies will be a reversal of evacuation procedures.

- To avoid confusion, services should identify a different alarm/warning from that used for evacuation.
- A range of possible dangers need to be considered (eg gas leaks, storms, trespassers).
- The emergency procedures for bringing children indoors will be clearly described in educators' induction information.
- Children will have regular practices of procedures, as for evacuation.
- The service must decide on:
  - where indoors the children will gather
  - how educators will communicate with children
  - how the educator to child ratio will be managed
  - how the gathering space can be located
  - suitability of the selected gathering space with regard to access to toilets and a telephone.
- The service should have a strategy to check that all children are safe and accounted for.
- Consider the school/site strategy and ensure there is a consistent approach that will meet the operational needs of the OSHC service.

### 4.3 Bushfires

With reference to the *DECD Bushfires Strategy for 2011–12*, OSHC services on DECD sites must develop a Bushfire Action Plan in consultation with the Approved Provider. This action plan must be included in the site's Bushfire Risk Management Action Plan.

- If OSHC is located on a DECD site, know your site's bushfire risk and consider the site Bushfire Action Plan.
- Identify the refuge building for safe evacuation/invacuation in liaison with the site leader.
- Ensure access to an analogue phone that can be plugged into the land line in the designated refuge building, in the event of a bushfire.
- If OSHC services are located outside the safer settlement and are in a bushfire prone area, develop a Bushfire Action Plan.

#### **Useful links**

1. Bushfire Action Plans at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/Bushfireactionplans.doc](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/Bushfireactionplans.doc)
2. Flow charts at [www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/bushfires/](http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/bushfires/) (go to Bushfire Action Plans, then Flowcharts)
3. Site emergency response teams at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/emergency\\_response\\_team.doc](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/emergency_response_team.doc)
4. Bushfire Policy and Procedures at [www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/12537/](http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/12537/)
5. Parent Information Brochure at [www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/bushfires/](http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/bushfires/) (go to Parent Information Brochure)
6. Bushfire Safer Settlements at [www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/bushfire/act/activating\\_your\\_bushfire\\_survival\\_plan/bushfire\\_safer\\_places.jsp](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/bushfire/act/activating_your_bushfire_survival_plan/bushfire_safer_places.jsp)
7. Planning SA: Bushfire Risk Level Map at <http://www.planning.sa.gov.au/go/development-plans/bushfire-protection-areas/bushfire-risk-level-online-search-tool/bushfire-risk-level-map>

**Services should also have specific guidelines for vacation care programming in the fire danger season and, in particular, the implication for excursions.**

**In summer months, some services may plan excursions to bushfire prone areas and so, whilst these services may not have bushfires action plans, they must have relevant procedures for planning and managing excursions.**

## Sample OSHC Policy

### Bushfire Safety

#### Policy

The location of our service is considered a high bushfire risk during the summer months, when fire danger increases. It is imperative that the service acts to protect both children and staff during this time. Due to the nature of our staffing environment and our service location, the service will not operate on days that are rated by the weather bureau as 'catastrophic'. Families will be notified should the service will be closed on a catastrophic bushfire day and no fees will be charged in the event that the service must close.

#### **DECD School Closure Policy**

[www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/BushfireRiskManagement.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/BushfireRiskManagement.pdf)

#### **ABC radio forecasts of catastrophic fire danger rating days**

[www.abc.net.au/local/](http://www.abc.net.au/local/)

#### **CFS Bushfire Information Line 1300 362 361**

#### Vacation Care Procedure

A qualified staff member on afternoon shift is responsible for the following.

Every afternoon at/from 4pm:

- Check CFS website—site is bookmarked in Internet Explorer on the links task bar.
- Check CFS hotline 1300 362 631 if internet unavailable.
- Determine fire danger rating for the next day.
- If rating is 'catastrophic'
  - OSHC is closed for that day
  - contact all families booked into the service and notify them of service closure
  - contact all staff rostered on for the next day and notify of closure.
- Secure building thoroughly on departure, ensure all windows, doors and toilet doors are sealed and locked. Ensure air conditioners, power points and appliances are all turned off.

After the first closure day and if there are successive 'catastrophic' rated days:

- The director is responsible for checking the CFS website or hotline for the fire danger rating for the next day.
- If the rating is 'catastrophic' for the next day, the director must contact all staff and families to notify of service closure.

## 5 Other considerations

A checklist of steps and procedures may be a useful tool to ensure that nothing is missed.

- The steps and requirements for evacuation/lockdown have been fully explained to all stakeholders, especially the children and educators. Ensure that instructions are clear and can be easily understood by the children.
- The procedures are determined for each service and for each component of that service, and that they are relevant to the service and its operational practices and its facilities.
- There are identified alarm strategies to be used and a person nominated to notify relevant emergency services.
- There are regular practices of evacuation/lockdown procedures and these practices are recorded and dated.
- Induction information for educators and children explains the emergency procedures.
- The information supplied to parents also explains the procedures.
- There are clear posters for the children to remind them of the steps.
- As part of the emergency procedures, the children have been prepared for the possibility of educators being injured.
- Special consideration has been given to times when there is only one educator on duty.

## 6 Resources/References

1. DECD Bushfires Strategy for 2011–12 at [www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/bushfires/](http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/bushfires/)
2. SA Country Fire Service (CFS website) at [www.cfs.org.au](http://www.cfs.org.au)
3. CFS Bushfire Information Line 1300 362 361
4. Local ABC Radio for up-to-date information
5. DECS OHS&W website at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrhealthsafety/pages/ohsms/policy/](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrhealthsafety/pages/ohsms/policy/)
6. DECD Emergency and Crisis Management at [www.crisis.sa.edu.au/](http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/)
7. DECD Bushfire Procedure at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/MossBushfireRiskManagement.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/MossBushfireRiskManagement.pdf)
8. DECD Bushfire Strategy at [www.crisis.sa.edu/pages/welcome/bushfires/](http://www.crisis.sa.edu/pages/welcome/bushfires/)
9. DECD Making Our Sites Safer—Guidelines for Site Leaders at [www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/EM05](http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/EM05)
10. DECD Management of Hazards at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrhealthsafety/pages/hazards/manage\\_hazards/](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrhealthsafety/pages/hazards/manage_hazards/)
11. DEC Bushfire Hazard Management Plan at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/BushfireHazardMan-1.doc](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/BushfireHazardMan-1.doc)
12. DECD Bushfire Action Planning Checklist at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/Bushfireactionplans.doc](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/Bushfireactionplans.doc)
13. DECS Bus Procedure for Bushfires at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/BusProceduresforBushfire.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/BusProceduresforBushfire.pdf)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

## Delivery and Collection of Children Policy

### 1 Background

Effective partnerships between an OSHC service and its families greatly assist in all aspects of service delivery. This is especially so in children arriving and departing from a service. It is in this short period of each day where bonds between educators, staff and families are developed and where children are welcomed and settled into the OSHC environment.

A service must retain records of attendance such as sign-in sheets and families are responsible for initialling these attendance records daily. Regulation 158 states that the attendance record is to be signed by one of the following persons at the time a child arrives and departs:

- (1) the person who delivers the child to education and care premises or collects the child from the education and care premises; or
- (2) nominated supervisor or educator.

A child in care may leave the service premises only in accordance with Regulation 99.

### 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service maintains clear processes to ensure that the arrival and departure of children is carefully monitored. Safeguards are also developed and regularly reviewed to keep children safe during the time of transition between school and OSHC.



### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
158, 168	2		
		Enrolment and Orientation Policy	Child Care Services Handbook
99		Child-safe Environment Policy—refer to Supervision	
		Fees Policy	
		Family handbook	

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 For before school care (when the service is on a school site)

- An agreement needs to be established with the school leader and communicated to all staff about how the transition from before school care (BSC) to school will be managed (eg in agreement with the site leader, at designated time, children will be signed out by the educator to walk to classrooms and from this time the children will be under the supervision of the teachers on yard duty).
- When children first begin school, families may arrange for educators to take the children to their classrooms. This option must be fully explained to families when children are enrolled, at which time options for individual children will be discussed and a strategy agreed to.
- Classroom teachers must also be informed of the agreed procedure and it is their responsibility to inform relief teachers when relevant.
- It should also be discussed with families that the agreed practice can be modified only after there has been consultation with the families.

### 4.2 For after school care

- All children coming to after school care (ASC) will be signed in by an OSHC educator.
- All children will be collected and signed out by a parent or approved person.
- Children may not go home unaccompanied unless there is signed written permission from a parent/guardian that identifies and qualifies such expectations. The Approved Provider/educators will reserve the right to negotiate such requests where there is concern about children's safety.

### 4.3 A child booked in fails to arrive

If a child booked in for the care session has not arrived by the designated time after school has finished, the educator will implement the service's procedure to locate the child. This procedure should be clearly documented and all stakeholders must be aware of their role. The service must determine the appropriate steps, which may include the following:

- Check the immediate area to locate the child.
- Call the front office at school to check that the child was at school.

- Call the parent or emergency contact numbers to establish whether the child is expected at OSHC or whether other arrangements have been made.
- Advise the family that police will be called and ask that a parent or a representative attend the school as soon as possible.
- Speak with the child's peers or siblings, who may have relevant information.
- When the child has been located, the information is to be shared immediately with those who may be assisting to locate the child.
- If the child cannot be found, the designated staff member will ensure that the child's family and the police are informed. When the police are notified (Police Call Centre 131 444), the following information needs to be ready:
  - name and address of the child and contact numbers
  - description of the child
  - time last seen
  - any medical conditions.

## 5 Roles and responsibilities

A service must retain records of attendance such as sign-in sheets and families are responsible for initialling these attendance records daily. Regulation 158 states that the attendance record is to be signed by one of the following persons at the time a child arrives and departs:

- the person who delivers the child to the service or collects the child from the service
- a nominated supervisor or educator.

## 6 Other considerations

### 6.1 Transition

- For new children, a mutually agreed transition plan will be developed for individuals for either/both BSC and ASC.
- Where children are enrolled in ASC as well as in other after school activities such as sport practice, the site must develop very clear transition procedures that are accepted by all stakeholders. Each stakeholder must be clear about his/her responsibilities in each potential situation (eg what is to happen if sports practice is cancelled). The OSHC service must have clear information for children and families about how the strategies will be implemented.

## 7 Resources/References

1. Transition into Outside School Hours Care—OSHCQA Fact Sheet #13 at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au) (go to NCAC archive)
2. Dealing with Family Law Issues in Preschool and Schools (currently being reviewed, refer to DECD Legislation and Legal Services Unit (LLSU) tel: (08) 8226 1555) at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/services/pages/leglegal/32146/](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/services/pages/leglegal/32146/)
3. Leaders and the Law (currently being reviewed, refer to DECD Legislation and Legal Services Unit (LLSU) tel: (08) 8226 1555) at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/services/pages/leglegal/32146/](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/services/pages/leglegal/32146/)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Excursions Policy

## 1 Background

Vibrant vacation care programs offer a balance of quality home days and exciting and challenging excursions for children. Larger services often look at splitting excursions in age groups (usually 5–8 and 9–12 groups). Some services have policies of optional excursions and so there are always some children who elect to stay at the service. It is up to individual services to determine what will work best for all involved.

A resource for reference is *Camps and Excursions Guidelines* which can be downloaded from the DECD website. This document addresses many of the issues OSHC services must address in planning excursions.

## 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service considers excursions an integral part of the children's program and will be planned and implemented to provide a broad range of experiences. Parental permission will be sought for all excursions. Each excursion will be carefully planned and the risks assessed.

## 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	2.3		
100–102		Risk Assessment Policy	Camps and Excursions Guidelines
		Consent forms	
		Emergency and Evacuation Policy— Bushfires, Sun Protection Policy	
		Medical Conditions Policy	

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 General

- No child will be taken outside the service premises on an excursion without the parent's/guardian's written authorisation (consent) on a form that includes the following:
  1. Child's name
  2. Reason for leaving the premises
  3. Date
  4. Description of the proposed destination
  5. Method of transport
  6. Proposed activities to be undertaken
  7. Period that the child will be away from the premises
  8. Anticipated number of children sharing the excursion
  9. Anticipated number of educators on the excursion
  10. Anticipated number of other staff and any other adults on the excursion
  11. An assurance that risk assessment has been completed.
- Educator to child ratios for excursions will be based on a risk assessment of the excursion as well as taking into consideration the National Law (sections 165, 167 and 174) pertaining to adequate supervision. Where there are new children or new educators, these factors need to be addressed in the assessment of risk. The risk assessment should address the following:
  1. The age and abilities of the children
  2. The destination and length of the excursion
  3. The transport to be used
  4. The previous experience of the accompanying adults
  5. The expected activities that children will participate in.
- On excursions, the regular code of conduct for both children and educators will apply. The director will ensure that all expectations relevant to the excursion are fully explained prior to departure.

### 4.2 Weather

- When excursions are planned, staff will take possible changes in weather and temperature into account.
- Weather forecasts should be checked 48 hours before the excursion. It is recommended that services organising excursions during the summer months check with their local CFS, MFS and/or the Bureau of Meteorology to monitor weather warnings that may be related to the location of the excursion, and implement contingency plans if required.
- **If planned excursions are to areas where there is fire danger, close monitoring of the potential danger and appropriate actions are essential.**
- Educators will ensure there are sufficient shaded areas for all the children to protect them from the sun, and undercover areas or enclosed areas to protect them from rain and cold weather.
- Programs must be flexible enough to cancel, modify or shorten an excursion if it is in the children's best interests and to offer alternative experiences.

### 4.3 Family information

- All excursions will be publicised to families and there will be no change to the publicised itinerary unless the person in charge of the excursion decides it is necessary for the safety and wellbeing of the children.
- In the event that the weather conditions require a change to the itinerary, the director will ensure that families are notified as soon as practicable. If this is before the departure time, a note on the day sheet or a take-home note with the details of the change will inform families.
- All excursions will require parent/guardian authorisation.
- Families will be advised if particular clothing is required, as well as snack/lunch requirements, and any other relevant information. This information can be posted near the sign in/out sheets.

## 5 Other considerations

It is recommended that staff visit excursion venues prior to their inclusion on the program, to ensure risks are minimised.

### 5.1 Use of private vehicles

It is not recommended that children are transported in private vehicles but if this is a practice in your service the Approved Provider must be confident all aspects of safety and the issues pertaining to insurance are covered. Consider the following:

- Consent should be obtained from families.
- Establish the minimum safety requirements for cars used to transport children (eg booster seats, safety harnesses).
- Establish the minimum requirements of the driver.
- Establish what insurance cover is required when private vehicles are used in this way. Ask the Motor Registration authorities about a car being used in this way.

## 6 Roles and responsibilities

### 6.1 The director and educators will be responsible for—

- Planning a quality on-site program as an alternative for children not going on an excursion.
- Meeting the needs of children who require medication, in accordance with the Medical Conditions Policy.
- Implementing the service's Sun Protection Policy on all excursions.
- Informing families about food for excursions.
- Developing strategies to enable employees to have breaks, in keeping with the relevant Award.

## 6.2 Families will be responsible for—

- Not sending their child on an excursion if the child has any signs of being unwell.
- Adhering to the requests from the service about clothing to be worn, food to be brought and any other specific requests.
- Being punctual and having children at care with sufficient time for the educators to make the essential final arrangements for scheduled departures.

## 6.3 Excursion checklist

### ***To take on excursion***

- A first aid kit, including SPF 30+ broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen
- A fully charged mobile phone
- A list of all children on the excursion and a list of emergency phone numbers
- A generic change of clothes

### ***Ensure***

- Children can access drinking water as required.
- There is a procedure for regularly checking all children are present whilst on excursions.
- There is a way for staff to communicate with each other if, through the course of the excursion, they become or are required to be separated (eg staff mobile phones or walkie talkies).

## 7 Resources/References

1. Camps and Excursions Guidelines for Schools and Preschools at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/CampsandExcursionsGuide.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/CampsandExcursionsGuide.pdf)
2. Guide to Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) (the appendices of this document provide a template for Risk Assessment Forms)
3. Education and Care Services National Regulations under the Education and Care Services National Law—2011 at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
4. DECD OHS&W Hazard Management at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrhealthsafety/pages/hazards/managehazards/](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrhealthsafety/pages/hazards/managehazards/)
5. Disability Services: For information about disability services in South Australia, phone Disability Information service on 1300 786 117 or email your enquiry to [disabilityinfo@dfc.sa.gov.au](mailto:disabilityinfo@dfc.sa.gov.au)
6. Example risk assessment: Risk assessment example—Walk to local park at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/childrensservices/files/links/Risk\\_example\\_walk\\_to\\_park.doc](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/childrensservices/files/links/Risk_example_walk_to_park.doc)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

## Child-safe Environment Policy

### 1 Background

The following is taken from QIAS Factsheet #2 from the National Childcare Accreditation Council:

*All children have the right to be safe at home, at school and in their childcare service. The provision of safe environments for children is essential to prevent injury and enable them to grow and develop. The management and staff of each service have a duty of care to provide safe child care environments.*

On Department of Families and Communities (DFC) SA website it is stated that from January 2011 organisations will be required to lodge a Child Safe Environment Compliance Statement. This can be done online by going to [www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/Default.aspx?tabid=929](http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/Default.aspx?tabid=929).

Services operated by Governing Councils on DECD sites are not required to lodge a compliance statement with DFC as this has been completed by the central office.

Please confirm with your Approved Provider if a Child Safe Environment Compliance Statement has been completed for your service.

Service providers may contact DFC for further information.

## 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service stakeholders are committed to the provision of a healthy environment in which children can grow and be safe. Educators and staff have an obligation to all children attending the service and are committed to defend their right to care and protection. To support this right and to ensure children’s protection, the service complies with the procedures set down under the *Children’s Protection Act 1993* section 11(1) and (2) when dealing with any allegations of abuse or neglect of children.

Also included are statements to address the following:

- physical environment
- tobacco-, drug- and alcohol-free environment
- child protection
- dangerous products
- identifying potential hazards
- supervision.

Services may choose to develop other statements about children’s safety in this section (eg Bullying—the right to feel safe at all times, social networking).

## 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	2		
103–115 82 & 84 155		Emergency and Evacuation Policy Infectious Diseases and Infestations Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Interactions with Children Policy Staffing Policy Excursions Policy	Child Protection Act 1993 OHS&W Act DECD Child Protection Policy



## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 Physical environment

When advice is needed in relation to any aspect of the following information, questions need to be directed to the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board of South Australia (the State Regulatory Authority). The Approved Provider must ensure:

- The premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and in good repair. There should be a system in place for monitoring and maintaining the premises, furniture and equipment.
- That for each child in care there is a minimum of 3.25 square metres of unencumbered indoor play space that is suitable for children.
- That for each child in care there is at least 7 square metres of outdoor space that is suitable for children.
- Indoor areas:
  - are well ventilated
  - have adequate natural light
  - are maintained at a comfortable temperature.
- There are adequate, developmentally and age appropriate toilet, hand washing and hand drying facilities, located and designed to enable safe use by children with convenient access from both indoor and outdoor play spaces.
- The service has adequate facilities for safe handling, preparation, storage and disposal of food and beverages.
- There is a capacity to provide effective supervision of the designated area.

### 4.2 Tobacco-, drug- and alcohol-free environment

The Approved Provider must ensure:

- That all children are being educated and cared for in an environment free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol.
- That the nominated supervisor, educators, other staff and volunteers of the service are not affected by alcohol when on the premises when the service is operating.
- That the nominated supervisor, educators, other staff and volunteers of the service are not affected by drugs that adversely affect that person's ability to educate and care for children when on the premises when the service is operating.

### 4.3 Child protection

- All services operated on DECD sites must adhere to the Child Protection in Schools, Early Childhood Education and Care Services policy and, therefore, do not need to develop their own specific policy to deal with section 4.3. The DECD policy is available at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ChildProtectioninSchoolsE.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ChildProtectioninSchoolsE.pdf).

- All adults who are working or volunteering in programs for children must undergo Criminal History Screening.
- The Children's Protection Act 1993 requires educators, staff and volunteers to notify the Child Abuse Report Line (131 478) if they suspect, on reasonable grounds, that a child has been or is being abused or neglected. This responsibility is part of the broad duty of care that staff and volunteers have towards the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- All educators and other staff should complete *Responding to Abuse and Neglect Education and Care Training* prior to working with children or, if this is not possible, they should be provided with a copy of *Protective Practices for Staff in Their Interactions with Students*.
- *Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect, Mandatory Notification Guidelines* are held at the service and must be read and understood by the staff, the Approved Provider and the Advisory Committee. These guidelines are also available to families.
- Employer and employee obligations in relation to allegations of child abuse are included in educators and committee handbooks. These obligations are specifically detailed to support new educators/other staff and committee members at the beginning of their employment/membership.
- As mandated notifiers, educators/other staff are required to attend approved training in relation to mandatory notification of child abuse. This will be paid for by the service.
- The service ensures families are aware that the service nominated supervisor, staff, educators and volunteers are mandated notifiers under the Act.

#### 4.4 Dangerous products

- It is recommended that non-hazardous and non-toxic products should be used in a care environment, wherever possible.
- Any hazardous or toxic cleaning products should be stored in a lockable cupboard with their relevant Material Safety Data Sheets.
- In the interests of children's health, staff are encouraged to use environmentally friendly products at the service, wherever possible.

#### 4.5 Identifying potential hazards

- Staff should carry out regular checks to identify and remove hazards, where possible, to manage safety risks. Steps to be taken:
  - Identify the hazard that may cause illness or injury.
  - Assess the risk.
  - Control the risk.

## 4.6 Supervision

The service is committed to:

- Complying with educator to child ratios.
- Ensuring that children are actively 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 educators to make decisions about when children’s play needs to be interrupted and redirected.
- Supporting educators and their care-giving strategies.
- Providing consistent supervision strategies when the service requires relief staff.
- Acknowledging and understanding when supervision is required for high risk experiences and/or the ratio of adults to children needs to be increased.
- Assessing all activities and, when something is identified as a high risk experience, strategies are developed to minimise the risk according to the group of children.

It is understood there is a shared legal responsibility and accountability between, and a commitment by, all educators and staff to implement the service’s policies, procedures and practices.

Staff must use their professional judgment when providing supervision to children, in addition to OSHC requirements for adult to child ratios. The amount and intensity of supervision of children will vary depending on:

- the degree of risk associated with the experience
- the age, development and ability of children
- the location of the experience (eg community- or school-based).

## 5 Resources/References

1. Creating Child Safe Environments, August 2010 at [www.dfc.sa.gov.au](http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au)
2. DECD Responding to Abuse and Neglect at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/childprotection/faqMandatoryNotificationTrng/?reFlag=1](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/childprotection/faqMandatoryNotificationTrng/?reFlag=1)
3. DECD Policy: Child Protection in Schools, Early Childhood Education and Care Services at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ChildProtectioninSchoolsE.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ChildProtectioninSchoolsE.pdf)
4. DECD Cyber Safety: Keeping Children Safe in a Connected World at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/CyberSafetyKeepingChildre.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/CyberSafetyKeepingChildre.pdf)
5. Keeping Them Safe: The SA Government Child Protection Reform program at [www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/default.aspx?tabid=283](http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/default.aspx?tabid=283)
6. Safety in Children’s Services Factsheet, Sonja Tansey for NCAC 2006 at [www.acecqu.gov.au](http://www.acecqu.gov.au) (go to NCAC archive)
7. Child Protection Policy at [www.acecqu.gov.au](http://www.acecqu.gov.au) (go to NCAC archive)
8. Protective Practices for Staff in Their Interactions with Students (April 2009) DECD at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ProtectivePracticesforSta.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ProtectivePracticesforSta.pdf)
9. Community and Disability Services Ministers’ Conference (2005) *Creating safe environments for children—Organisations, employees and volunteers: National framework*. Retrieved January 18, 2007, from [www.ocsc.vic.gov.au/downloads/childsafeframework.pdf](http://www.ocsc.vic.gov.au/downloads/childsafeframework.pdf)



# Staffing Arrangements

(National Quality Standard 4)

Including the following policy areas required under the Regulations:

- Code of Conduct for staff
- Determining the Responsible Person present at the service
- The participation of volunteers and students on practicum placements

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Staffing Policy

## (including a Code of Conduct)

### 1 Background

The success of a service is enhanced by a competent and innovative staff team. However, a team needs a nurturing environment with supportive leadership: an environment where effort is rewarded, the work load is understood and where it is recognised that an OSHC service is adding value to its community. The Approved Provider, as an employer, must be fully conversant with the legal obligations of an employer and have a delegated person responsible to ensure that there is compliance with the requirements.

**It is a requirement that employees have access to the Award that spells out the terms and conditions of their employment. Remember that the specified Award sets out the minimum entitlements for employees, and conditions may be above Award specifications.**

### 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service supports our employees to attain their full potential because we recognise that these people play a significant role in the daily lives of many of our children and their families. Our employees must all complete the required Criminal History Screening. We are an equal opportunity employer and encourage diversity within our staff team. Where possible, we support our employees to balance work and family commitments. We are happy to accept volunteers and students in our team, though these people will not be included in our child to adult ratio. We expect a full commitment from each team member.

Also included are statements to address the following:

- volunteers/students on practicum placements
- equal opportunity
- leave
- employees working alone (single staff services)
- managing performance
- professional development.

Staff grievance is addressed in the Complaints Policy and matters pertaining to OHS&W are dealt within the Governance and Management Policy.

State clearly that it is a requirement for all employees to take time to become familiar with all service policies as many of them will guide the day to day work of each person.

### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	4.2 2		
46, 54 118–154 169	7.1 7.2 7.3	Employees Handbook Governance and Management Policy	Relevant Award Fair Work Australia Long Service Act (SA) 1987 OHS&W Act (SA) 1986 Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act (SA)1986 Superannuation Guarantee Act 1992 Racial Discrimination Act 1975 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 Equal Opportunity Act 1995

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 General

- State the Award educators/staff are employed under.
- Name the employer (eg school Governing Council and the nominated line manager for employees).
- Describe the recruitment process for educators/staff—this may vary and the process for hiring a director and other qualified educators may be quite different from that used to hire unqualified educators. Each process needs to be documented. Ensure that there are clear processes documented that emphasise the need for referee checks.
- Be familiar with the specified minimum qualifications and this includes processes for ensuring that there are appropriate criminal history clearances.
- State how and where positions will be advertised.
- All employees (and volunteers and students) must have a comprehensive induction as they commence work/placement (refer below).
- Include the contract forms for all employees.
- It is possible that a service may have an employee who will require to be on leave because of workplace injuries. Services need to have an understanding of the implication of such a situation and have a position on the rehabilitation of such employees.
- Include statements about record keeping and confidentiality.

- DECD Governing Council operated services must employ staff through a merit-based selection and recruitment process and may choose to use the DECD Performance Development Policy to develop a process for managing staff performance. Governing Council employment of non-teaching staff such as OSHC educators must be guided by the Administrative Instructions and Guidelines Section 5 Division 2.24.
- Other Approved Providers may have specific organisation requirements relating to recruitment, selection and performance management.

## 4.2 The participation of volunteers and students on practicum placements

Volunteers and students on placement will not be counted in the educator to child ratio. They will be allocated tasks to support other personnel. Approved Providers should develop specific guidelines and practices for use in the OSHC service to support volunteers. Volunteers are mandated notifiers and will need to have a knowledge of OHS&W, Duty of Care, and the service's policies, particularly the policies that address interactions with children, supervision, confidentiality and training and development. DECD has a comprehensive policy that can be accessed at [www.DECD.sa.gov.au/policiesa-ztopics](http://www.DECD.sa.gov.au/policiesa-ztopics). When developing a process, consider the following:

- Selection/screening.
- Induction to the site and the tasks allocated.
- Supervision of volunteers.
- Record keeping that relates to volunteers (refer to Regulation 149 for records that must be held).

Regarding students on practicum placements, check the following:

- Will students on practicum come with a criminal history screening?
- Will the time they spend in the service be defined by their course supervisor?
- Is a written report completed at the end of the practicum?
- Where possible, allocate tasks to students and give some evaluative comments when a task is completed.

## 4.3 Equal opportunity

The service will:

- Include a statement of its commitment to equal employment opportunity in all advertisements for employees.
- Ensure that selection criteria do not exclude any groups from equitable consideration for positions.
- Ensure that selection panels will be sensitive to the needs of applicants from disadvantaged groups, particularly people with language difficulties and cultural differences.
- If applicants have a disability, assess the applicant against the selection criteria. The panel will apply the principle of reasonable adjustment to any impact the applicant's disability may have on the operations of the service.
- In regard to the service training plan, ensure that all employees have equitable access to training and development opportunities.

Consider that, where the population of children using the service contains significant numbers of children from a particular cultural group, there may be opportunities to attract suitable workers from that cultural group.



## 4.4 Leave

- In accordance with the relevant Award, specify clearly when leave can or can not be taken. If the service closes for some days over the Christmas holiday period, indicate that this time may be able to be taken as annual leave.
- If the service is going to adopt the policy of being a family friendly employer, there will need to be consideration given to how personal leave will be approved. Will this be strictly in keeping with the Award or will there be some above Award considerations?

## 4.5 Employees working alone (single staff services)

Consider the following and assess the risks:

- If an educator is working alone with a group of children, there must be additional safety procedures and contact information that is known and understood by the educator, children, families and the Approved Provider (eg what to do in the case of the educator being unable to carry out tasks).
- Programming can be considerably restricted when there is only one adult present. Simple issues such as the educator or children going to the toilet become much more complex when there is only one adult on site.
- Approved Providers must, by negotiation with the educator in relation to the conditions of employment, establish how a single staff service will be operated so that the safety and wellbeing of both educator and children is addressed.

Use the following points as a checklist:

- Ensure that other related service policies address the reality that the educator may be alone with the children.
- Ensure that the sole adult has a list of contact numbers in case of emergency. This list needs to include people who have fast and easy access to the OSHC service.
- Ensure that the employee has procedures to support his/her own safe arrival to and departure from the service.
- Have a checking process in place to be sure that the before school care educator has arrived at work.
- Have a current relief staff list.
- Ensure that there is constant access to a working phone, both for indoor and outdoor programs. In some areas, a back-up phone may be required.
- Ensure there are procedures relating to toileting for children and the adult.
- Ensure that there is a reasonable procedure in place to enable the educator to have the required breaks during the course of the program.
- If there is money on-site, have specific processes and strategies in place in relation to this. If on a school site, ensure that the school insurance requirements are met in relation to money—check with the Approved Provider.

## 4.6 Performance and development

Performance and development connects the work of all employees to organisational planning, strategic objectives and relevant performance standards through individualised planning, learning and accountability programs.

Performance and development planning is a cycle of individual performance planning, professional learning and performance review that supports individual performance improvement.

The primary point of engagement for performance and development planning is a performance conversation between employee and manager. Performance conversations are an opportunity to confirm performance expectations and behaviour standards, seek and receive feedback, provide evidence, and seek support, clarification and direction.

Performance conversations are not a one-off event. Coaching, support, training, feedback and recognition provided on a regular basis throughout the life of a performance and development plan are essential to achieving a high performing workforce.

Formal procedures must be clearly documented, with the documentation being kept securely and confidentially.

All members of a staff team or the management body involved in a disciplinary process shall keep all information about the process confidential.

*For a guide to developing a performance and development process, please refer to the Department of Education and Child Development Performance and Development Policy and Guideline.*

### **Unsatisfactory performance**

Unsatisfactory performance occurs when an employee is not performing the duties of his/her role to the required standard, or otherwise is not performing in a satisfactory manner.

Performance and development will, from time to time, identify areas of unsatisfactory performance. In most instances, it will relate to an isolated element of an employee's performance rather than the totality of his/her performance.

If it becomes apparent that an element of an employee's performance is unsatisfactory, the leader should advise the employee of how his/her performance is alleged to be unsatisfactory, and provide evidence and examples as appropriate.

*For a guide to developing a Managing Unsatisfactory Performance process, please refer to the Department of Education and Child Development Managing Unsatisfactory Performance Guideline.*

### **Natural justice and procedural fairness**

The opportunity to be heard by an impartial decision maker is at the heart of the rules of natural justice and procedural fairness. The rules of natural justice apply whenever the rights, property or legitimate expectations of an individual are affected by a decision.

Decisions in the context of the management of alleged unsatisfactory performance are administrative decisions and may clearly affect the rights of legitimate expectations of employees and the rules of natural justice and procedural fairness must therefore be applied.

## 4.7 Professional development and training

- The Approved Provider will allocate sufficient resources to meet the development and training priorities of the service. This is expressed as a percentage of the annual salary budget (2.5 per cent could be a starting point).
- The director is responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating an annual professional development and training plan for the service.
- This plan will:
  - Include a development and training needs assessment, based on the performance reviews for individual needs and consultation with educators, and the OSHC Committee for the service's priorities.
  - Be presented to the Approved Provider annually prior to the development of an annual budget or as required, to allow development and training to receive an adequate budget allocation.
  - Ensure that development and training opportunities are provided equitably to all educators/staff.
  - Include a variety of methods of development and training delivery such as: (1) internal workshops for staff to share their expertise with each other, (2) internal workshops conducted by outside presenters/experts, (3) attendance by educators/staff at external workshops, conferences and seminars, (4) short courses provided by training organisations such as TAFE, and (5) networking.
- Staff members who attend external development and training opportunities will share the skills and knowledge they have gained with colleagues, where relevant.
- All staff will evaluate all development and training activities against the needs identified in the development and training plan.
- The service must determine who will meet the costs of any authorised development or training activity.

## 4.8 Code of conduct for staff

This could initially be developed by the staff team and then approved by the Approved Provider. The Regulations also refer to the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics—refer to [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au). The Approved Provider may elect for this to be used. Some services on DECD school sites have adapted the Code of Conduct from the public sector, an SA Government document. A code of conduct may address the following (and other points as agreed):

- Team work—responsibilities to co-workers and customer service; how to respond to families, children and other visitors.
- Confidentiality in relation to children, families and other staff members—this should outline how information is gathered and stored and who has access to information and under what conditions.
- Duty of care—be confident that all staff understand their obligations to meet the duty of care for children and other staff.
- Understanding of the legal requirements relating to child protection.
- The responsibility for modelling appropriate practice to children and new staff, especially in relation to sun protection, and health and hygiene practices. Some services also include a dress code.
- That staff members use their initiative in the workplace in relation to the daily mundane tasks that have to be completed, such as packing up and maintaining order in work areas.
- That each staff member fully participates in accordance with the position description, as well as contributing to program planning and implementation and participating in professional development and training.
- That all staff know and understand the philosophy and goals of the service as well as the operational policies and procedures of the service.

It is a requirement of all employees to familiarise themselves with the content of the service code of conduct and to carry out their duties in a manner that is consistent with its values, behavioural principles and standards of professional conduct.

It is important to communicate to employees the values and principles of conduct expected of them relevant to their profession.

Contravention or failure to comply with a professional conduct standard will constitute misconduct. An employee who contravenes or fails to comply with the conduct standard may be liable to disciplinary action.

## 4.9 Staff handbook

Each team member should have a current handbook and much of this information can be repeated in the service's Family Handbook.

## 4.10 Induction

*Induction is a key process in creating and maintaining a positive and professional culture. Each individual who begins work at the service should have a clear understanding of their role and the expectations of their performance, and should be given the opportunity to engage with the philosophy and context that underpin the operation of the service at the earliest possible time.*

Element 7.1.2 *Guide to the National Quality Standard*, October 2011, ACECQA.

New employees need a comprehensive induction and to be supported and guided in their first weeks in a new position. Individual services should determine what induction process they will use for volunteers and students on placement.

## 4.11 Determining the Responsible Person present at the service

There must be a designated Responsible Person present at the service whenever the service is operating. This can be the nominated supervisor: a prescribed or declared certified supervisor who has consented to be the Responsible Person placed in day to day charge of the service.

The name of the Responsible Person should be publicly on display at all times when children are in care and should be visible to anyone on entering the service. The name should also be recorded in the daily roster.

## 5 Other considerations

### 5.1 Educators/Staff handbook

The following list offers a guide to headings that should be considered in the preparation of a staff handbook:

- Statement of philosophy
- Hours of work—hours that the service operates
- Other expectations of time (eg educators meetings)
- The number of children in care—each component
- Boundaries (including maps) and information about what they can expect from the children (eg behaviour guidance practices)
- Daily routines:
  - before school care
  - after school care
  - vacation Care
- Introductions to other staff (ie profiles)
- Code of Conduct—consider such aspects as detailed explanation of duty of care, supervision and what is expected ( this may include something about the use of personal mobile phones)
- Staff entitlements—including breaks, how to apply for leave, superannuation
- Staff responsibilities as team members
- Staff responsibilities as role models (need to adhere to service policies such as the Sun Protection Policy and the Nutrition Policy)
- General information about the service (eg history, who operates the service, the management structure of the service and a basic description of the relevant legislation that the service must comply with; number of Child Care Benefit places for each component, capacity of venue).

### 5.2 Educators/Staff induction checklist

New employees sign an induction checklist to indicate that they have read the required information listed when they commence duty.

The checklist can also include an item about the information the service will require, including taxation information (declaration and tax file number), contacts details, details of qualifications including first aid and mandatory notification.

## Suggested Checklist for New Employees

**I have received the following:**

Yes No

- Position description .....
- Contract .....
- Induction checklist .....
- Handover notes from previous staff (if relevant) .....
- Hours of work and hours that the service operates .....
- Other expectations of time (eg staff meetings) .....
- The number of children in care .....
- Physical boundaries and play spaces .....
- Boundaries and information about children’s behaviour and needs  
(eg behaviour guidance practices) .....
- Daily routines    Before school care .....    
                                  After school care .....    
                                  Vacation care .....
- Introductions to other staff (ie profiles) .....
- Code of Conduct .....
- Staff entitlements (including breaks) .....
- Staff responsibilities as team members .....
- General information about the service (eg (1) history, who operates the service,  
the management structure of the services and a basic description of the relevant  
legislation that the service must comply with, (2) OSHCQ -accredited or not,  
and number of CCB places, capacity of venue) .....
- Relevant service contact information and when to use it (eg calling in sick  
or seeking to swap shift with a colleague) .....

**I have completed the following:**

- Tour of the OSHC facilities and general explanations
- Had opportunities to ask questions
- Know where and how to find what I need, including all relevant service operational information
- When service is located within another organisation (ie a school), a tour of that facility
- Emergency procedures
- Explanation about car parking and safe storage for personal possessions
- Introductions to key people and an explanation of their link to OSHC

**The following has been completed:**

- Signing a contract and/or letter of appointment
- Supplying required information, including taxation information (declaration and tax file number),  
superannuation information, contact details, details of qualifications including first aid and mandatory  
notification
- Complying with the service’s staff screening requirements
- Signing the induction checklist

Director: .....

Staff member: .....

Date: .....

## 6 Resources/References

1. Protective Practices for Staff at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ProrectivePracticesforSta.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ProrectivePracticesforSta.pdf)
2. Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics at [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/code\\_of\\_ethics/childhood\\_australias\\_code\\_of\\_ethics.html](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/code_of_ethics/childhood_australias_code_of_ethics.html)
3. DECD Creating and Sustaining a Performance Development Culture at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrdevelopment/pages/workforcedevelopment/performancecdevelopmentculture](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrdevelopment/pages/workforcedevelopment/performancecdevelopmentculture)
4. Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector at [www.espi.sa.gov.au/page-351](http://www.espi.sa.gov.au/page-351)
5. Merit Selection Policy, Procedures and Instructions 2010 at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrstaff/pages/recruitment/meritdocs/](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrstaff/pages/recruitment/meritdocs/)
6. Relevant Awards
7. Award information and assistance:
  - Fair Work Australia at [www.fwa.gov.au](http://www.fwa.gov.au)
  - Department for Education and Child Development—Human Resources at [www.DECD.sa.gov.au/hr](http://www.DECD.sa.gov.au/hr)
  - NetworkSA at [www.networksa.org.au](http://www.networksa.org.au) (for award information, sample job descriptions)





# Interactions with Children

(National Quality Standard 5)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Interactions with Children Policy

## 1 Background

The implementation of the National Quality Framework sees the introduction of a learning framework—*My Time, Our Place*—for school age children in education and care settings. This framework recognises the valuable role OSHC services play in the lives of children and families. *My Time, Our Place* sets a vision for children’s learning through play and leisure, in contrast to the expectations in classroom settings. There is new language to adopt and incorporate into our OSHC settings and an emphasis on the use of reflection in all practices.

## 2 Example policy statement

The .....OSHC service uses the *My Time, Our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia* to underpin the operational development of the service and ensure that the needs of each child are addressed. Our philosophy states the service’s purpose and direction and underpins all policies and procedures. The ethos of our service is to value each of our OSHC educators and enable them to access professional development and training to inform them of the latest research findings that will guide and empower them to effectively support and nurture children.

## 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	1, 5.1, 5.2 & 7	Philosophy Statement	My Time, Our Place
155 & 156			

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 General

- The development of this policy should be underpinned by the *My Time, Our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia*. *My Time, Our Place* contains broad principles that underpin practice and reflect contemporary theories and research regarding children’s play, leisure and learning. The principles of secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships; partnerships; high expectations; and equity and respect for diversity should guide interactions with children. ‘Educators who are attuned to children’s thoughts and feelings support the development of a strong sense of wellbeing and social competencies’ (*My Time, Our Place*, p10). Educators who strive to build strong connections with children contribute to their sense of belonging, fairness and self-esteem. ‘Partnerships are based on effective communication which builds the foundations of understanding about each other’s expectations and attitudes and build on the strength of each others’ knowledge’ (*ibid*). Important qualities for educators when building relationships with children include fairness, integrity, authenticity, humour, sympathy, understanding and open communication. The practices and outcomes identified in *My Time, Our Place* will guide educators in their interactions with children.
- Reflective practice is another principle underpinning the school age care framework. It is central to sustaining high quality programs and interactions with children and brings theory and practice together to enable learning from experiences and to adapt and develop practices in the light of new understandings. Learning together with children and colleagues draws upon the diverse knowledge, experiences, views and attitudes of individuals within the group. Being reflective means being open to change and examining current beliefs, attitude and knowledge while constantly looking for ways to improve. Services implement reflective practice by providing time for educators to examine aspects of service delivery: firstly, how it is done and, then, questioning why it is done this way. This examination allows educators to reflect on current theory as well as attitudes and beliefs, which may influence their views. Inquiry may increase levels of cultural appropriateness and reveal practices that may impact on children’s wellbeing.
- Where the Approved Provider of the service is a school governing council/board, the practices and procedures of the school need to be considered and reflected in the policy.
- Following are service policy examples as suggestions relating to behaviour guidance, inclusion and conflict resolution through mediation.
- Individual services may also choose to have policy statements on the following areas:
  - play
  - programming
  - using reflective practice
  - bullying.

## *Sample OSHC Policy*

### **Behaviour Guidance Policy**

The OSHC service is committed to meeting the needs of the children in care in a way that fosters a positive and nurturing environment. The safety of all staff and children are a priority. Children and staff are to be treated respectfully. Within the service environment, staff and children work collaboratively to define consequences for the actions of children who do not respect or consider the safety of others. The service has clear steps for unacceptable behaviour, which are compatible with the school policies and procedures.

We believe that to effectively guide children's behaviour we need to:

- ensure children are continually guided positively and encouraged towards acceptable and inclusive behaviour in order to maintain their self-esteem, dignity and personal integrity
- guide children to recognise personal responsibility and self-discipline
- acknowledge that children can learn from their mistakes
- be fair and consistent
- when guiding children's behaviour, place focus on the behaviour and not the child
- recognise that a child's behaviour is affected by a multitude of factors, including age, physical environment, time of day, staff and other children's actions, family experiences and cultural backgrounds
- work together with families and teachers to build positive relationships
- provide a wide and varied program to reduce boredom and discontent
- seek input from families and children when reviewing behaviour management policy, to encourage ownership and acceptance.

The behavioural expectations are as follows:

- We respect and care for ourselves, other people and property.
- We work and play safely and cooperatively.
- We follow directions of teachers/staff members.
- We stay inside the supervised boundaries.

The following steps are introduced when the rules are not being followed:

1. The child is reminded of the rule or expectation.
2. A short time away from the area of play, or a logical consequence, such as removal from, for example, the sandpit is imposed.
3. Additional time out of play is imposed, with associated consequences, such as loss of some privilege or a written apology.
4. Repeated inappropriate behaviour will result in consultation with families. At this time, the child, parent/guardian and director may negotiate and formulate a behavioural plan.
5. If parental consultation and behavioural plan does not improve behaviour, the issue will be directed to the school's principal and may result in Internal Suspension.
6. If all of the above steps prove unsuccessful, the child may be asked to leave the program.

## Sample OSHC Policy

### Inclusion Policy

The OSHC service is committed to providing an environment with activities and experiences that encourage all children to learn, extend their skills and have fun. The service will offer care for children from diverse cultural, linguistic and economic backgrounds and for children with varying developmental, physical and intellectual abilities. The program will be developed to accommodate the needs of all children in care. The service will actively promote the positive aspects of diversity and encourage acceptance and appreciation of individual differences. Staff will respect individual differences and treat everyone without bias, prejudice or reference to stereotyping, and will encourage the children to do so too.

How the policy will be implemented:

- The individuality of all children and staff will be respected.
- The service is respectful of staff, children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and structures the program to assist these individuals wherever possible.
- Programming will be inclusive of each individual's cultural needs and differences as much as possible; diversity will be celebrated. This assists children in understanding and appreciating cultural diversity.
- The service will actively seek input from cultural identities within its local community.
- Children and staff with disabilities and additional needs will be included into the service once appropriate levels of support to facilitate effective inclusion are available. This may include some physical facilities, specialised staff training, and additional staff.
- A positive relationship is formed with families of children with additional needs to learn more about the child, his/her requirements and the expectations of the family.
- Staff will help children to show understanding, acceptance and respect for individual differences by modelling appropriate behaviour and using opportunities such as informal discussions during play to address issues of fairness and justice.
- Staff will encourage children to communicate with each other respectfully and to be fair to one another.
- Staff will interact with children without bias, prejudice or reference to any stereotype and will avoid making comparisons between children.
- Strategies for staff to reduce bias and prejudice in the service will be included in the staff handbook.
- A statement of inclusion will be handed out to all guests and activity providers.
- The service will program equitably for boys and girls and, where possible, offer opportunities for activities to be done individually or in groups, providing the children with choice within the service.
- The service identifies and encourages children's differing special qualities and ensures that programming enables each child to succeed.
- Resources will be monitored within the service to ensure that there is no evidence of stereotyping, bias and discrimination.
- To ensure that all children are receiving optimal care within the service, staff will participate in professional development and training and have ready access to reference materials within the service.

## Sample OSHC Policy

### Managing Conflict Through Mediation Policy and Procedures

The OSHC service recognises that the service will run most effectively when there is minimal conflict and that any conflict is resolved quickly. We recognise that mediation is an effective tool in achieving this and actively promote it within the service for all participants to use.

Mediators promote constructive communication, help disputants take responsibility for their own actions, clarify their needs and feelings and focus on mutual needs and interests.

Mediators HELP people in a conflict to work together to resolve the dispute. This principle acknowledges that children in conflicts (disputants) have the wisdom within them to resolve their own disputes. The mediator GUIDES and HELPS this to happen.

Staff are expected to use the mediation process with children's disputes.

#### **What is mediation?**

- Mediation is a fair way to resolve conflict. A mediator does not take sides, but serves as an impartial listener and facilitator to help people in conflict come to an agreement.
- Mediation is workable because the disputants solve their own conflict and their feelings are dealt with.
- Mediation focuses on problem solving rather than on blaming, punishment or revenge.
- Mediation enables the child to own and accept his/her behaviour and the consequences because the child has been involved in resolving the conflict through the mediation process.

In order for mediation to effectively resolve conflict, the mediator needs to be an active listener, which involves:

1. Putting yourself in the other person's place to understand what the person is saying and how she/he feels.
2. Showing understanding and interest by your:
  - tone of voice
  - facial expression
  - gestures
  - eye contact
  - body language.
3. Do not:
  - interrupt
  - offer advice
  - give suggestions.
4. Reflect and paraphrase what the person has said to ensure that your understanding of the situation is accurate.
5. Ask questions to clarify what is being said.
6. Repeat in your own words what you think the person means.

**Rules for mediation to occur**

If the problem is to be solved, the mediator and disputants must agree on the following points:

1. One person speaks at a time, no interrupting.
2. Everyone listens to each other.
3. Everyone is honest.
4. No 'put downs' should be expressed.

The mediator will be fair and not take sides.

**Mediation steps**

Decide who will talk first, then ask:

1. What is the problem?
2. How do you feel?
3. What do you want to happen?
4. What is the plan/solution?
  - Work with suggestions until disputants develop one they are both happy with.
  - There may be more than one problem.
  - Make sure all problems are solved.
  - Check that both disputants are happy with the plan.
5. How can you avoid the problem happening again?

In closing, tell the disputants the problem is solved.

**Strategies for resolving conflicts**

- |               |                  |               |
|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| 1. Take turns | 2. Share         | 3. Compromise |
| 4. Apologise  | 5. Get help      | 6. Avoid      |
| 7. Humour     | 8. Allow chances |               |

**Handling difficult situations**

1. What are the likely problems?
  - Are they telling the truth?
  - Is there a lack of willingness to solve the problem?
  - Is there an inability to explain the situation due to low self-esteem, powerlessness or unequal power?
2. Strategies to counter difficulties
  - Review rules and agreements (ie the importance of honesty).
  - Separate disputants and talk to them individually, and then try to solve the problem all together.
  - Allow disputants a cool-off period until they are willing to participate.

**What if one person won't agree to mediate?**

Staff member asks what will happen/are the consequences if the problem is not sorted out. Then ask if that is what the disputant wants to happen.

**No** Then it will help to mediate.

**Yes** Then I can't help you now. If you change your mind I will help you.

(This disputant then suffers the consequence.)

The person who did want help needs to carry on until such time that the other disputant is willing to enter into mediation.

## 5 Resources/References

1. It is recommended that services have some reference material that underpins their practice. The following names provide useful reference points for internet searches: Dr Louise Porter, Ben Furman, William Glasser, Dianne Nixon and Katy Gould.
2. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at [www.unicef.org/crc/](http://www.unicef.org/crc/)
3. DECD Discipline in Schools Policy at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/SchoolDisciplinePolicy.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/SchoolDisciplinePolicy.pdf)
4. DECD Protective Practices for Staff in Their Interactions with Students at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ProtectivePracticesforSta.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ProtectivePracticesforSta.pdf)
5. Guiding Children's Behaviour in a Positive Way—Article from Putting Child First Issue No 25, March 2008 at [www.acecqu.gov.au](http://www.acecqu.gov.au) (go to NCAC archives)
6. My Time, Our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au) (go to publications)



# Service Management

(National Quality Area 7)

1. ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION
2. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT
3. CONFIDENTIALITY
4. AUTHORISATIONS
5. FEES
6. COMPLAINTS

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

## Enrolment and Orientation Policy

### 1 Background

*All children have the right to be treated equitably in our society ... An environment where children are treated equitably relies on adults that accept and respect similarities and differences in children's families' and each other's culture, gender, sexuality, ability and beliefs.*

OSHCQA Factsheet #8 from National Childcare Accreditation Council

In approved OSHC services, enrolments will be accepted according to the *Australian Government 'Priority of Access' Guidelines* (refer to the Australian Government *Child Care Service Handbook* at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au), go to Publications).

### 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service will incorporate an orientation process for both children and their families. The purpose of this is to:

- enable educators/staff to meet and greet children and their families
- provide essential operational information
- form the foundation for a successful and caring partnership between home and the OSHC service.

An enrolment form must be completed for each family and, where necessary, a health support and personal care plan provided for individual children. Families will receive an information pack as they enrol to ensure that they have easy reference to the information they will need.

### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
160, 161, 162, 177 & 168	6.1 7.3	Enrolment form Administration of First Aid Policy	Australian Government Child Care Service Handbook
		Governance and Management Policy Confidentiality Policy Family handbook	

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 General

- The policy needs to state how often families will be required to complete enrolment forms.
- Strategies need to be in place to remind families to update their information.
- Storage of and access to enrolment information has to be decided (refer to the Governance and Management Policy—Maintenance of Records).
- Provide support for families not fluent in English to complete the enrolment—translation may be required in some areas.
- Waiting list information, if relevant, should be included.
- Families using care services must take responsibility for advising the service when any of the following changes occur:
  - name
  - contact information such as phone, mobile phone or email
  - emergency contacts that service has been given
  - the collection authorisation for the service
  - responsibility for the account.

This information should be highlighted in the family handbook and also verbally explained as part of the enrolment process.

- The names, addresses and contact details of all people authorised to collect children from the service will be included on the enrolment form and signed by the parent/guardian, and any changes to these must be advised in writing to the service by the custodial parent/guardian as soon as possible.
- If the custodial parent/guardian arranges for an unauthorised person to collect his/her child from the service, the parent/guardian must firstly advise the service via a telephone conversation and then give written advice of this arrangement and confirm who will collect the child. An email or text message can be verification of a phone call. Educators/staff will seek proof of identity in cases where the person authorised to collect children is not known to staff.
- There should be clear policy statements about custodial issues, and strategies in place to support educators/staff.
- Educators/staff must communicate with families in a positive and supportive manner to develop the parent–child relationship and the parent–staff relationship.

- Families will have access to the director at any reasonable time, to discuss any concerns regarding their child. This may be on the spot, by telephone or by appointment.
- Educators/staff will not discuss with families confidential information regarding any other child or family within the service.
- Families may visit the service at any reasonable time while their child is in care.
- Where an Intervention Order exists, staff will uphold the efficacy of the order where it is reasonably practicable and safe to do so. If there is an immediate danger to the child as a result of carrying out or complying with any provision of an Intervention Order, then those provisions should not be carried out. Further information can be accessed at [www.crisis.sa.edu.au](http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au).
- In the case of a parent/guardian arriving at the service in a visibly intoxicated or otherwise unfit state to drive to collect a child, the person will be encouraged to contact another adult to drive him/her and the child home, or the service will offer to call a taxi. If the unfit person insists on taking the child, the police will be immediately informed and the release of that child into the care of that person should be delayed until such time as the police arrive. The parent/guardian shall be advised that such will occur.
- Where any perceived safety to a child is at risk (in relation to access to that child), the police will be immediately requested for assistance.
- Enrolment information must include hours of operation for each component of care. Services also need to have strategies to gather information about the suitability of these hours, as conditions for users may change. If a service operates vacation care as well as before and after school care, it is logical that the opening and closing times are consistent with other components of the service.
- Services may have conditions for operating on school pupil-free days (eg a specific number of children may be required to ensure the viability of the day). Families will need time to make alternative arrangements if care is not available.

## 4.2 Access to the service

- Access and enrolments will be subject to the Priority of Access Guidelines (*Child Care Service Handbook*).
- Equal opportunity principles will be observed in relation to access to the service for children and families.
- The conditions for access to the service by children of employees need to be stated.
- The conditions for access to the service by children of OSHC advisory committee members/service providers need to be stated (eg committee members' children can be cared for by the service with no fee payable if the committee member is engaged on committee business, for the duration of that business only). Ensure that insurance will cover these children and also be sure that the required educator to child ratio is maintained.
- Placement is to be organised through the director in accordance with the service policy.
- Staff and committee members must pay the standard fee if their children attend the service.
- Where relevant, establish a waiting list and service protocols for managing that list.
- Establish procedures for when a child who is suspended from school wishes to access OSHC.
- Access to the service will be denied in the case of children being suspended or excluded from the service. Exclusion will occur only after all other avenues of communication and support have been exhausted and when:
  - a child puts one or more children at risk through inappropriate/dangerous behaviour (see Interactions with Children Policy)
  - a child has an infectious disease (see Infectious Diseases and Inestations Policy)
  - a child's needs are such that specific staff training or venue adaptation may be required—in such instances the child should be able to access the service when appropriately qualified educators are identified and the necessary physical support requirements can be met.

### 4.3 Orientation

When new children arrive, take time to get to know them. You may begin this process by having them give some written information (eg 'About me sheet'). This information can be the start of developing a child's profile. Consider taking the following actions:

- Check out all the information on the enrolment form.
- Spend time explaining how the session will work and what they may and may not do. 'Buddying' a new child with someone who has used OSHC for some time is useful.
- Explain boundaries.
- Explain 'OSHC rules' and how they fit with school rules.
- Introduce them to other educators as soon as possible.
- Frequently take time to ask how they are settling in.

#### ***For families***

- Would you like educators to deliver or collect from the classroom?  
If yes, how long do you want this to continue?
- Educators will keep you informed about this process as there may come a time when the child is quite comfortable to change the arrangements.
- Do you have clear strategies to remind children that they are to come to OSHC?

#### ***For educators***

- Which new children need to be collected from and taken to classrooms?
- What is the process when a booked child does not arrive?
- Explain the daily routine to new children (eg coming to OSHC from class, roll call, play and activities, food and afternoon tea procedures including hand washing and toilets).
- Designate a particular educator to a new child.
- Outline what happens on excursions (when applicable).
- Describe what happens with accidents and first aid.
- Describe the emergency procedures.
- Talk to children about what to do if they feel unsafe or anxious.
- Ask children if there are special things they would like to tell us about themselves.

## 5 Other considerations

### 5.1 Enrolment checklist

- An enrolment form must be completed for each family and, where necessary, a health support and personal care plan provided for individual children.
- Include details of an enrolment fee or bond to be charged.
- Include waiting list information, if relevant.
- Include confidentiality statements and make reference to the Confidentiality Policy.
- Document clear procedures for the collection of children by families, authorised people and unauthorised people.
- Provide clear information about opening and closing times.

### 5.2 Enrolment procedures

- Encourage families to make time to enrol children so that they can be fully informed about the service and its requirements.
- Enrolling families should be offered a family information booklet that answers the questions new users will need—an induction pack.

### 5.3 Enrolment form

- Some services will use the enrolment form that is provided by the CCMS software and others will develop individual forms.
- Refer to the Confidentiality Policy when preparing an enrolment form.

### 5.4 'About me' form

Your service may elect to have a form that children can complete on enrolment that gives ideas relating to:

- what they like to do in their leisure time
- what they like to eat
- their friends.

## 6 Resources/References

1. Health Support Planning in Education and Children's Services. CHES 2006 at [www.chess.sa.edu.au](http://www.chess.sa.edu.au)
2. Australian Government—Australian Child Care Service Handbook at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
3. OSHCQA Factsheet #8 National Childcare Accreditation Council at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) (go to NCAC archive)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Governance and Management Policy

## 1 Background

*This policy focuses on effective leadership and management of the service that contributes quality environments for children's learning and development. Well documented policies and procedures, well maintained records, shared values, clear direction and reflective practices enable the service to function as a learning community. An ongoing cycle of planning and review, including engagement with families, creates the climate for continuous improvement.*

Guide to the National Quality Standard, October 2011, ACECQA

A comprehensive overview of the governance and management of OSHC services can be found on [www.DECD.sa.gov.au/OSHC](http://www.DECD.sa.gov.au/OSHC). This information addresses the work that needs to be undertaken. Services that are not on state government school sites may easily access this information and adapt it to their own circumstances. Approved Providers must ensure that they have a full understanding of requirements and ensure that the staff team has access to all the National Quality Framework documentation.

**Please note the following:**

- Refer to Regulation 173 to locate the list of prescribed information that services must display.
- The Regulations that follow this provide relevant reporting information.
- Regulation 172 states that there is to be notification of changes in policies and procedures.
- Regulation 185 states that it is a requirement that the National Law and the Regulations are available at the service's premises.

## 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service undertakes to ensure that all aspects of governance and management are clearly articulated and that this complements the service philosophy and statement of purpose. There is an ongoing process of review and evaluation and all relevant information is readily available to stakeholders.

Also included are statements to address the following:

- philosophy and policies
- financial management
- facilities and environment
- equipment and maintenance
- review and evaluation of service
- records management
- occupational health, safety and welfare.

### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	7.3		Food Safety Standards
171 172 173 177		Family handbook Employee handbook Complaints Policy	
183–184 185 103–115			

### 4 The policy must address the following areas

The Approved Provider must ensure that copies of the current policies and procedures required under Regulation 168 are available for inspection at the service at all times (as per Regulation 171).

#### 4.1 General

- Define the roles and responsibilities of key personnel and delegate tasks accordingly where these tasks are to be undertaken by educators/staff. Consider Awards and levels of Awards and time estimated to complete tasks.
- Detail how communication between the service and management will take place and how often.
- In many instances, OSHC services will be operated by a school council/board that will be the legal entity and the employer of educators/staff. There will need to be comprehensive two-way reporting process and a meeting schedule, which should be included in the policy.



## 4.2 Philosophy and policies

- The development and review of these documents is an ongoing process.
- The philosophy and associated statement of purpose should underpin all other documentation and the practices of the service. A philosophy should be developed and maintained by the OSHC community and be reflective of the values and requirements of its community. There should be a collaborative and consultative process to support the development of the philosophy. The statement of purpose defines how the statement of philosophy will be implemented.
- Policies (and procedures) provide clear documentation that defines agreed and consistent ways of doing things to achieve the stated outcomes.
- Both the philosophy and the policies should be ratified by the Approved Provider.
- All documents should be dated and include nominated review dates.
- There should be a comprehensive index for the service policies as it is likely that umbrella policies may address several aspects of operational practice.
- The service philosophy and policies should be readily available for all stakeholders and there should be reference to this in various handbooks and general service information.
- The statement of philosophy will also be included in the Quality Improvement Plan for the service.
- There should be an electronic version of all current documentation of all policies.

## 4.3 Financial management

- OSHC services need to be financially accountable and to be operated as a financially viable and sustainable business.
- The details of budgeting and fee setting are set out under the Fee Policy.
- For an OSHC service to improve and develop there must be scope to plan improvements for the service—it is good practice to maintain provisions for planned future expenditure. All specific provisions should be formally approved and noted in meeting minutes.
- It is a requirement of employers that there are provisions held for employee entitlements as per the Award. Such money should be available as needed. Employees should be advised of their available entitlements with each pay.
- Services operated by school Governing Councils on DECD sites must adhere to the organisational financial management policies and procedures outlined at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/goldbook](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/goldbook) and contained in the OSHC Resource Kit at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/oshc](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/oshc).

## 4.4 Statement on facilities and environment

- Regulations 103–115 relate to the physical environment required for an OSHC service. The requirements are set out clearly and need to be considered when site re-arrangements are considered.
- Approved Providers must be aware of the requirements and ensure the requirements are met at all times.
- Services will require adequate storage space for equipment; there must be an appropriate space for administrative tasks as well as space where confidential meetings can be undertaken. Areas for food preparation should meet the requirements of the Food Safety Standards and be approved by the relevant local government authority.
- Where service employees are required to pack up after each session, consider the OHS&W implications and ensure risk assessments of the required practices are undertaken.

## 4.5 Equipment and maintenance

- To be inviting for children as well as meeting their needs, OSHC services need to have appropriate equipment that is well maintained and safe.
- This is an ongoing expense and so the service budget should reflect this expense.
- There are processes set down for routine cleaning of toys and equipment.
- Furniture will be regularly checked to ensure that it is safe.

## 4.6 Procedures for review and evaluation of the service

- Ongoing review and evaluation will underpin the ongoing development of the service. Such evaluation should involve all stakeholders, especially families, children and educators/staff.
- The development of a Quality Improvement Plan will form part of the review process. The development of a plan will require reflection on what works well and what aspects of the service can be further developed.

## 4.7 Confidentiality

This is addressed in the Confidentiality Policy.

## 4.8 Maintenance of records

- **Regulation 177** outlines requirements and includes references to records that services must keep. **Regulations 183–184** detail storage of records.
- OSHC services have a duty to keep adequate records about staff, families and children in order to operate responsibly and legally. The service will protect the interests of the children and their families and the staff, using procedures to ensure appropriate privacy and confidentiality. For those services on DECD sites, refer to [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/RecordsManagementPolicy.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/RecordsManagementPolicy.pdf).
- **The Approved Provider assists in determining the process, storage place and time line for storage of OSHC records.**
- The service's orientation and induction processes will include the provision of relevant information to staff, children and families.
- Clear guidelines on which people have access to which particular records will be given to advisory committee members, staff and families. These will be available at all times at the service.
- Government departments have differing requirements relating to the length of time a service needs to retain records. Approved Providers will need to ensure that their record retention process meets the requirements. Check with the following:
  - Australian Tax Office
  - Family Assistance Office
  - Department for Education and Child Development.
- Confirm the length of time required for the storage of accident reports and recorded information about children's participation in the service.
- In the event of ceasing to operate, a service should identify where the records will be kept.

## 4.9 Occupational health, safety and welfare (OHS&W)

- The establishment and maintenance of a safe workplace is a joint responsibility of employers and employees. The Approved Provider of an OSHC service will have practices and procedures to address the legal requirements relating to safety in the workplace and this information should underpin any service specific requirements, including grievance/complaints procedures.
- In those services operated by school councils/boards, site OHS&W Coordinators should include OSHC in their oversight of the site practice. Services need to identify whether or not they should have someone undertake the responsible officer training.

## 5 Other considerations

Services may wish to consider developing the following:

- information pack for members of advisory/management committee and the provider members (school council/board)
- flow chart to identify the delegation of tasks
- an Instrument of Delegation.

## 6 Resources/References

1. DECD Health & Safety at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrhealthsafety/default.asp?navgrp=955](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/hrhealthsafety/default.asp?navgrp=955)
2. DECD Records Management at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/rmp/pages/cg0000941/standards-guidelines/](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/rmp/pages/cg0000941/standards-guidelines/)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Confidentiality Policy

## 1 Background

OSHC services have access to sensitive and private information about children, families, employees and management. Records and information must be stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality, must be available at the service, and must be maintained in accordance with legislative requirements.

Information should not be collected unless it is required. People are entitled to know why information is being collected and the service's policy about disclosure of the information it holds. Personal information about children should not be held without families' knowledge.

## 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service makes every effort to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals by ensuring that all records and information about individual children, families, staff and management are kept in a secure place and are accessed by, or disclosed only to, those people who need the information to fulfil their responsibilities at the service or have a legal right to know in accordance with legislative requirements.

### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168 145–152	7	Governance and Management Policy	Privacy Act 2010 Freedom of Information Act Ombudsman Act
175–176		Enrolment form	OSHC Resource Kit Organisational procedures on records management and disposal
174–178		Medical Conditions Policy	DECD Governing Council Code of Conduct The Australian Government Child Care Service Handbook, DEEWR

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 General

- Be clear on what information is collected and why, including both child, staff and educator records.
- Determine who needs information and why, then determine which information needs to be kept confidential. Establish how confidential information is to be stored.
- Consider how and when confidentiality applies to conversations. Work out how this will be managed. Consider conversations with families about children, staff hand-overs and meeting reports. Your service will need to have a designated area where private conversations can be held. Also consider the passage of information between OSHC and the school. There are real benefits to be gained from shared information but families must give consent and be aware that this can happen.
- Accountability requirements include confidentiality.
- Seek advice from the Approved Provider about record storage. Record keeping requirements vary for different information; ensure that regular checks are made to confirm the required length of storage time required from each level of government as well as the Australian Tax Office.
- Ensure that confidential information is handled and stored in a way that safeguards the reputation of the service.
- Ensure that storage practices are secure.
- Ensure that all stakeholders are protected by the procedures relating to confidentiality.
- Ensure that all stakeholders understand the requirements relating to access to confidential information.
- Develop processes for reviewing and updating records and information on a regular basis.
- Develop a service practice in relation to the retention and disposal of records.

- **The following records for each child are confidential and must be kept in a secure and accessible place:**
  - personal details (name, address, date of birth)
  - relevant medical details (if any)
  - relevant custody details (if any)
  - details of people authorised to collect children from the program
  - permission for child to leave the service unaccompanied (if applicable)
  - forms for signing in and out of children at the beginning and/or end of programs
  - name, home and work address and phone numbers of families/approved persons
  - name, address and phone numbers of people who may be contacted in an emergency
  - authorisation to seek emergency medical, hospital and ambulance services (or the chosen alternative of the families/approved person)
  - any special needs or considerations relating to the child’s medical needs/excursion needs
  - authorisations to administer medication, and details of medication administered
  - written authorisations to take children outside the service (eg excursions).
- **Under the Regulations, there are specific staff and educator records that need to be kept. Services need to list these and ensure that these records are confidentially maintained.**
  - A file for each employee should be maintained.
  - Qualifications should be noted and a copy of confirmation of these kept. This should include first aid and associated courses (eg asthma and anaphylaxis training).
  - Refer to the relevant Award to ensure that all the required information is kept.
  - Maintain records of performance review and professional development and training.
  - Ensure there is contact information for next of kin.

## 5 Resources/References

1. Privacy Act at [www.privacy.gov.au](http://www.privacy.gov.au)
2. Australian Child Care Service Handbook, DEEWR (current edition) at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

## Authorisations Policy

### 1 Background

Approved Providers must obtain authorisation from parents/guardians and authorised nominees in some circumstances for situations such as:

- administering medication to children (Regulation 92)
- children leaving the premises in the care of someone other than their parent/guardian (Regulation 99)
- children being taken on excursions (Regulation 102).

Approved Providers should refer to Regulation 168 (2) and, in particular, refer to ACECQA at [www.acecqa.gov.au/news-and-media/article/?id=getting-parents-authorisation](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/news-and-media/article/?id=getting-parents-authorisation) for advice on policies and procedures for obtaining authorisations.

### 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service has clear processes to ensure that all requirements relating to authorisations are met as determined by the Law. These policies specifically outline for educators and families what steps they must take to ensure children are safe when being educated and cared for.

### 3 The policy must address the following areas

- The administration of medication: Ensure that there is consistency with the Medical Conditions Policy.
- Children leaving the premises in the care of someone other than their parent/guardian: Refer to the Delivery and Collection of Children Policy to ensure consistency.
- Children being taken on excursions: Refer to the Excursions Policy and ensure consistent practice.

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

## Fees Policy

### 1 Background

OSHC services are generally operated as not-for-profit businesses. Approved services receive an allocation of Child Care Benefit places and these must be managed in accordance with Australian Government legislation (refer to the *Child Care Service Handbook* at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au)).

The Approved Provider of the service has the legal responsibility for ensuring that there are sound practices in place to manage the fees and related income and expenditure of the OSHC service.

OSHC services have limited opportunities to source funds other than fee income. Therefore, the development of a service and its facilities must be addressed by planning and making provisions within the operational budget of the service.

The financial management of individual OSHC services will differ, based on the requirements and practices of the Approved Provider. The following information is intended as a guide/prompt that Approved Providers and directors can use to determine their own processes.

### 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service sets fees in accordance with our annual budget to meet the income required to develop and maintain a quality service for children and families. We strive to ensure that our service is affordable and accessible to families in our community. The annual budget is ratified by the Approved Provider annually, or as necessary, and monitored carefully throughout the year.

The service uses [name package] software which is a package specifically designed to process bookings, attendances and produce a statement to show family fees. This package is approved for the Australian Government by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

The service will support families by providing relevant information as it becomes available but families must be responsible for liaising with the Family Assistance Office as needed. Families are reminded that the service is unable to communicate with the FAO with regard to details of their CCB or CCR. This is a confidentiality matter for all parties.



Also included are statements to address the following:

- bookings and cancellations
- late collection of children
- budget and financial management
- debt management.

### 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	7.3	Enrolment and Orientation Policy Complaints Policy	Australian Government Child Care Service Handbook
		Governance and Management Policy	

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 General

- Outline all fees and any penalties that can be charged, ensuring that these meet the requirements of the *Child Care Service Handbook*. This statement of fees should include all charges in addition to sessional fees for care, for example:
  - Registration fee: State whether this is an annual or once-off fee and whether it is charged per child or per family. This fee does not attract a Child Care Benefit.
  - Bonds: State whether the service charges a bond from each family to cover the cost of unpaid fees. Outline how this liability will be managed and credited to families when they leave the service.
  - Up-front fees: State whether the service require families to pay a proportion of fees up front.
- Outline the service's process for managing the payment of fees, including when accounts are issued, timelines for payment by families, methods of payment accepted and how families can raise concerns about fees charged or payment of fees.
- Determine how often accounts are issued and the length of time in which families should pay. There may be some families who wish to negotiate specific arrangements. As proof of payment, a receipt will be issued.
- Encourage families with outstanding accounts to discuss the position with the director and inform them that the service has a debt management policy.
- Explain that details of a family's fees and accounts will be confidential and stored appropriately. Families may access their own account records at any time, or particulars of fees will be available in writing to families, upon request.
- Determine and state how families will be informed about Allowable Absences, Special Child Care Benefit, Jobs Education and Training, and Grandparents Child Care Benefit.

## 4.2 Bookings and cancellations

The following information is prepared in accordance with the Australian Government requirements as set out in the *Child Care Service Handbook*. Each family is expected to make bookings, in advance, for the care sessions required. Information must include dates, times and the names of children who will attend, to ensure that the service is prepared with resources, training and staffing to meet the children's needs. The program and educator rosters are based on bookings and so the service will charge fees for booked care that is not used.

- Service policies and procedures ensure that for any given session there is a list of children booked for care so that educators can accurately check attendances and efficiently follow up any booked children who do not arrive.
- The service provides families with information about approved and allowable absences.

In addition, individual services should consider the following:

- Application of allowable absences.
- Cancellation procedures, including the time required for cancelling a booking without incurring a penalty—this may be different for different components. In vacation care services, the policy may specify that 5 working days' notice must be given to avoid a penalty. This may be followed with sliding penalty rates (eg 50 per cent of full fee for 3 days' notice and full fee for 24 hours' (or less) notice). These fees are all penalty fees and so do not attract a CCB.
- Implications of emergency care and how this will be addressed. If children who are not collected from school are sent to the service, the Approved Provider and site need to have clear practices that consider the following:
  - capacity of the service
  - family eligibility for Child Care Benefit
  - child enrolment information
  - maintaining educator to child ratios
  - child health care plans
  - required permission from the family that this is a process that they agree to
  - collection of fees and management of unpaid fees
  - duty of care responsibilities.

## 4.3 Penalty for late collection

- There is a clear statement that defines late collection of children and the penalties that are incurred. This information should be explained fully as a part of the enrolment process. The policy statement should consider the following:
  - Sometimes there are circumstances beyond the control of families (eg weather and traffic accidents) where the director may have some discretion to review how families will be billed. If there are several families who genuinely struggle to meet the deadline of closing time, it may well be time, to review the operating hours.
  - What is the late fee? Set a fee that will adequately cover the cost of additional staffing and other costs.
  - When will it be applied?
  - How will it be documented, charged and receipted?
  - How will the service respond to families who are frequently late (eg suggest other care options)?
- Remind families regularly of the need to ensure that the contact information as well as the names of those who can collect children is kept up to date. At the time of enrolment, check that there are contacts given that are near to the OSHC service. Refer back to the Enrolment and Orientation Policy for updating information.

## 4.4 Budget

- The service fees must be set to meet the budget for each financial year.
- The OSHC committee treasurer, in conjunction with the director and other personnel such as a principal and school finance officer, will develop the annual budget detailing annual estimated income and expenditure. The final budget will be ratified by the Approved Provider.
- There will be ongoing monitoring of the budget and, should it be necessary to amend fees, families will be given a minimum of fourteen days' notice of any fee increase (refer to Regulation 172).

## 4.5 Financial management

- Outline roles and responsibilities within the service to ensure that there are clear processes to keep relevant people informed to effectively carry out their designated tasks. Failure to do this will result in poor outcomes and the potential for misunderstandings. Processes to effectively manage a service's finances should consider:
  - How and when banking will happen—whose task is it?
  - Who prepares financial reports for the Approved Provider? Such reports should detail the following: income and expenditure and how this compares with the budget forecast; and any relevant comments pertaining to the report. A financial report should be made to the Approved Provider no less than twice each school term and this should be acknowledged and recorded in meeting minutes.
  - Who prepares the wages for OSHC staff—when is this done, what is needed and will this work in vacation care? Also needed is clear documentation on which day is pay day and how staff will be paid on this day when the person responsible for wages is not at work.
  - Who maintains the OSHC staff records and entitlements in accordance with Award entitlements?
  - What steps are required to pay OSHC bills, and allocate petty cash?
  - What is the process to allow approval to the director for discretionary spending (this may be necessary especially in vacation care)?
  - OSHC accounts need to be audited. What is the process? The service should be audited annually, endorsed by the Approved Provider and the auditor's recommendations considered.
  - How are financial delegations documented (eg written approval for the director to spend a discretionary amount for expenses)? Most purchases for large amounts need approval. Describe this process.
- Copies of all financial records will be kept for a minimum of seven years and will be available for inspection by Australian Government officers.
- A management pack of general OSHC information should include a summary of the service's financial position.
- Financial records must comply with:
  - Any agreement with the Australian Government in respect to Child Care Benefit and grants for Outside School Hour Care Services.
  - Other Australian and State Government legislation, such as *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936* (Australian Government), *Superannuation Guarantee Charge Act 1992* (Australian Government), and relevant industrial Awards and organisational policy.
  - The requirement to keep an assets register, including all items over \$100 owned by the service. It will be maintained by a nominated person.
- Key personnel need to be aware of the enrolment advances from DEEWR and ensure that these are managed as a liability in the accounts.

## 4.6 Debt management

Services rely on fees to cover all operational costs. It is important that fees are collected regularly so that staff can be paid and other expenditures met. Effective monitoring of the income and expenditure reports against the service budget is essential.

Ensuring that all families pay their fees promptly is an equitable way to manage the finances of the service. The policy needs to make provision for the following:

- Confidentiality: Individual names and details will not be discussed openly by members of staff, OSHC management or the Approved Provider. Information should only be available to the nominated persons required to take action.
- Strategies used to manage outstanding fees:
  - When will families be deemed as having outstanding fees? (For example, two weeks behind in their fees.)
  - How will families be notified of outstanding fees, timeline for payment and the possible consequences of this?
  - How can individual arrangements for payment be negotiated? Who is this arrangement made with? (For example, families may pay an account over an extended period of time. Arrangements should always ensure that continuing care is paid in full and that a portion of what is already owed is also paid.)
- **Unpaid fees: Who will be responsible for actioning this?** Here is an example of a suitable approach if no payment has been received within a nominated number of days or no individual arrangement for payment has been negotiated, or negotiated arrangements have not been followed:
  - The child/children will be denied access to the service until all outstanding debts are paid.
  - Families will be issued with a final account noting that they have previously received [a nominated number of] accounts and that their child/children have been denied access to the service. They then have [a nominated number of] days to finalise their account or a debt collection agency will be engaged to deal with the matter. (Some services choose to use the Small Claims Court to follow up outstanding debts rather than a debt collector.)
  - The Approved Provider will be informed when children have been denied access to the service.
- **Unpaid fees but the family continues to use the service: Outline the process the service will follow if a family who has been denied access continues to utilise the service.** What assistance is available to the family? (For example, families experiencing genuine hardship may be entitled to a Special Child Care Benefit. This can be arranged with the director.)

## 5 Resources/References

1. DECD Gold Book at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/goldbook/pages/home/home/?reFlag=1](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/goldbook/pages/home/home/?reFlag=1)

Policy number: ..... Approval date: .....

To be reviewed: .....

# Complaints Policy

## 1 Background

An effective complaints and grievance management system confirms to educators, staff members, children, families and the community that complaints and grievances are taken seriously and investigated promptly and thoroughly. The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will be applied when managing complaints.

Individual services should identify which agency will offer support in an instance where a complaint can not be resolved by following the service process. This information should be included in the site's policy.

Under the Education and Care Services National Law, the Approved Provider has a legal responsibility to notify the Regulatory Authority of certain matters within a stated time frame. One of these matters is where a complaint is made in relation to either of the following:

- a complaint alleging that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised
- that the law has been breached.

Complaints of this nature are to be identified at a site as 'notifiable complaints' and the Approved Provider must inform the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours.

The following details are required in the notifiable complaint report:

1. Date complaint received
2. Complainant's name and contact details
3. Name of child/children to whom complaint relates (if relevant)
4. Copy of written complaint (or written summary) and any other relevant documentation (including correspondence, photographs, statements)
5. Steps taken/actions planned by the site in response to the complaint.

For any service operating on a school site, the school principal or nominee, as line manager of the OSHC director, should be informed when there are complaints.

**Please note:** For services operated by a DECD school, the Governing Council must follow the DECD Parent Complaints Policy at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy\\_index](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy_index), or contact 1800 677 435, or email [DECD.ParentComplaint@sa.gov.au](mailto:DECD.ParentComplaint@sa.gov.au).

## 2 Example policy statement

The ..... OSHC service takes complaints about the service, its staff, educators, practices and procedures seriously. There are processes in place to ensure all grievances and complaints are addressed, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner.

The service will address complaints by:

- Ensuring a clear, accessible and documented complaints procedure is made available to all families, educators/staff and children.
- Ensuring that the process is fair to all parties involved.
- Ensuring that complaints are dealt with promptly.
- Maintaining confidentiality.
- Maintaining records of complaints, processes and outcomes.
- Notifying the regulatory body of any complaint that alleges the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised, or that the law has been breached.

## 3 Relationship

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	7.2	Employee handbook	Relevant Award
173	7.3	Family handbook	Privacy Act
176			

## 4 The policy must address the following areas

### 4.1 General

The Complaints Policy and procedures will be made available to families through the family handbook given to families on enrolment. The service's policy document will also contain the Complaints Policy and procedures and will be available to families at the service.

Educators and staff will access the Complaints Policy and procedures through the policy documents and staff handbook issued on employment and whenever an updated version is issued.

Children will access the complaints procedure through conversations with educators, clearly displayed posters at the service and through discussions with families.

Service staff managing complaints must be aware that there may be situations where a conflict of interest arises and action may need to be taken to manage such situations.

Complaints can be made in the following manner:

- verbally—in person or by phone
- in writing—via email, fax or mail
- suggestion box
- feedback forms.

### 4.2 Procedure for families lodging a complaint

The complaints procedures should include statements like the following:

- Families are requested to not discuss complaints in front of children. It may be that an appointment with the director will need to be made.
- Complaints regarding any aspect of the service should be addressed with the director in the first instance. If the complaint is about the director, it should still be addressed to the director.
- In the event that you feel you are unable to discuss your complaint with the director or in the event that discussion with the director proves unsatisfactory, your complaint can be directed to [insert name/title].
- In the event that you feel uncomfortable in dealing with a complaint personally, you may nominate an advocate to mediate on your behalf.
- We welcome your feedback and suggestions at all times. These may help us to continuously improve our service. A suggestion box is located in the OSHC office.
- Families have a right to lodge a complaint directly with the Regulatory Authority.
- The service will display the name and telephone number of the person at the education and care service to whom complaints may be addressed.
- The service will display the contact details of the Regulatory Authority.

### 4.3 Procedures for educators lodging a complaint

The complaints procedures should include statements like the following:

- If the complaint is of an industrial nature, the requirements of the relevant Award must be addressed and followed. External advice may need to be sought.
- From time to time staff conflicts arise. In the interest of the children and the professional operation of the service, these grievances are investigated promptly, thoroughly and confidentially.
- Some complaints may be resolved by presenting the matter for discussion at a team meeting.
- In the event that you feel you have a problem with any aspect of the service, please make a time to speak with the director.
- If you feel the director has not dealt with your complaint satisfactorily, you may approach the Approved Provider.
- Staff may have a union representative or other person present at any meeting or interview and may withdraw from the process at any time.
- The staff handbook will name the relevant union for employees.

### 4.4 Procedures for children lodging a complaint

The opportunity for children to make complaints should be fully explained to them. Such complaints may be in relation to incidents with other children, issues with educators or of a general nature.

The complaints procedures should include statements like the following:

- Educators will take children's complaints seriously and attend to them as a matter of priority whilst maintaining confidentiality. Where educators are unable to take appropriate action regarding a child's complaint, educators will inform the director.
- Complaints relating to educators, educator conduct or aspects of the program are to be directed to the director. Children may have a family member or other representative to assist them raise their concerns.
- Children are encouraged to give feedback and make suggestions.



## 4.5 Complaint handling process

- The Nominated Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that any complaint that alleges a breach of legislation or a serious incident is reported to the Approved Provider. The Approved Provider will be responsible for ensuring that the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board is notified within 24 hours of any complaint that alleges a breach of legislation or where the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised.
- The Approved Provider and/or director will:
  - Investigate complaints promptly and thoroughly with the understanding that the complainant will not be disadvantaged through the process.
  - Listen/read the complaint and document the exact details of the complaint.
  - Seek further information, to clarify the issues and investigate the complaint, including speaking to other parties involved as required.
  - Seek additional advice from line managers and other agencies, including legal advice as required.
  - Refer to any State or National Regulations or organisational policy that may provide clarity to the complaint, as required.
  - Assess the complaint fairly and determine the best possible resolution.
  - Inform the complainant of the outcome in writing or verbally, as required, in a timely manner.
  - Ensure that the complaint process and its outcome are documented and that all documentation is treated and stored confidentially.

Complaints not resolved at this level may be referred by either the complainant or the Approved Provider to the external agency identified by the Approved Provider to investigate the matter.

- Families have a right to lodge a complaint directly with the Regulatory Authority.

## 5 Resources/References

1. DECD Responding to Concerns from Families and Caregivers at [www.crisis.sa.edu.au/files/links/Responding\\_to\\_Concerns.pdf](http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/files/links/Responding_to_Concerns.pdf)
2. NCAC OSHCQA Factsheet # 15 at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) (go to NCAC Archive)
3. DECD Parent Complaints Policy: A Guide to Raising a Concern or Complaint at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy\\_index](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy_index)
4. DECD Complaint Resolution for Employees at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy\\_index](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy_index)
5. DECD Complaints: Parent Concerns and Complaints Procedure at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy\\_index](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy_index)

