

POLICY: 2.2 Child Protection

Procedure: 2.5 Supervision of Children

This procedure acknowledges that supervision is one of the most important strategies and skills required by Educators to develop and master. Active supervision is a combination of listening to and watching children play, being aware of the environment and its potential risks, thinking about the weather conditions, the time of day, managing small and larger groups of children and an understanding of child development including theories about how children play.

2.5.1 Linking to Policy

This procedural guidance should be read in conjunction with the Service's **2.2. Child Protection Policy** and will assist the Approved Provider, management, staff (Nominated Supervisors, Coordinators and administrative staff members), Educators (where applicable Educator Assistants) and parents in relation to supervising children. The procedure covers:

[2.5.2 About Supervision](#)

[2.5.3 Four Principles of Supervision](#)

[2.5.4 Ensuring the Program Activities are Safe](#)

[2.5.6 Supervision Processes](#)

[2.5.7 Overnight Care Consideration](#)

2.5.2 About Supervision

Adequate supervision: (In relation to this procedure) supervision entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the Educator's residence, being in direct sight and/or hearing of an Educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines.

Educators are always required to comply with the legislative requirements for Educator-to-child ratios. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the Service. Adequate supervision requires that Educators be always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- Number, age and abilities of children
- Personality, behaviour and characteristics of each child
- How children interact, communicate and play with one another is dependent on Educators building relationships with children to learn about who they are, how they react in certain situations and discover their interests
- Current activity of each child

- Areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- Developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- Experience, knowledge and skill of the Educator
- Need for Educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies)
- Number and positioning of other adults.

These are vital skills to develop as they assist Educators in predicting children's play patterns, which affect how Educators plan, establish environments and coordinate supervision strategies to maximise children's safety and ability to play free from harm or injury.

2.5.3 The Four (4) Principles of Supervision

1. The positioning of an Educator in the environment

When supervising children, Educators will consider how they position themselves both in the outdoor and indoor environment. Educators need to consider:

- Do I have my back to any of the children?
- Are new or high-risk experiences being used and where will I stand/sit during these experiences to best support and supervise children?
- Are there hidden corners or areas which children may play in that pose a risk?
- Are there other adults present and
- Where is the best place to situate themselves to ensure the safety of children?

2. Scanning the environment and knowing the number of children

Scanning is vitally important when supervising children. Educators will regularly scan the environment/room when children are outdoors and/or sleeping and when babies are in cots:

- Regular checking of school age children who may not be, being directly supervised
- Educators need to develop a system of regular head counts marking each child's arrival and departure and when on excursions, to ensure that they are fully aware of where each child is at all times
- Educators should have a list of people who are authorized to pick up each child from the Service and information regarding those people not allowed to collect a child.

3. Listening when children play

Listening is also important. Educators need to be aware of children and the noises they make. For example, water splashing; crying; choking or gasping; offensive or aggressive language; or silence.

- This strategy must be considered, in addition to sighting children – listening on its own is not an appropriate practice.

4. Setting up the environment

During outdoor set-up, be aware of where children are (or will be) and how they will use the equipment when thinking about the supervision required. Grouping equipment together such as easels and water troughs makes supervision much easier.

2.5.4 Ensuring the Programmed Activities are Safe

Children of all ages and abilities are naturally curious. They have an appetite for exploration and an urge to investigate and understand. They want to find out how the world around them works and what they can do to extend their abilities and build their sense of themselves as competent, capable people.

Whenever children learn, they move from what is routine and familiar to what is less certain, more challenging and hopefully more engaging. This movement is more pronounced and especially powerful when children are learning from their own experiences and efforts, as happens in child-initiated and child-led learning activities, both in the indoor and outdoor environments.

Getting to grips with new challenges often brings a degree of risk; think of a child learning to take their first steps or to ride a bicycle. These risks can rarely be eliminated without also undermining the learning.

It is the Educator's role to consider the children's growth and development, how this relates to the activities and the way the environment is set up when making curriculum decisions and planning for children's learning. Educators will use the environment as the third teacher by thinking about the equipment that is available and the learning they are trying to facilitate for each child.

Service's Educational Leader and Coordinators will:

- Support Educators to develop and implement an educational program that considers supervision in the context of each child's safety, health and wellbeing and
- Support Educators to undertake a risk management process by making the time to meet with each Educator and together consider any potential hazards, risks, controls and review processes to ensure children are safe.

Educators will:

- Consider the age and development of each child when planning for activity/experiences, taking into consideration the size of materials and resources to avoid hazards such as choking. The height of the equipment should be a consideration regardless of the age of the child.
- Before planning for and seeking permission from any child's parent to undertake an excursion, travel to the proposed location and walk around the location to ensure you can successfully supervise all children, as well as identify any other hazards and risks to children.
- Refer to 3.1 Educational Program and Practice for further procedural guidance.

2.5.5 Supervision Processes

Educators will:

1. Display awareness - a skill that requires a knowledge of each child, including knowing each child's range of skills, interests, their ability to interact with others and their developmental stage. Knowledge of each child assists the Educator to monitor and enhance skills that promote children's resilience and positive behaviour.
2. Implement positioning - a skill that requires being able to see all of the children. Educators position themselves to be aware of the entire environment and to see as many children as possible. All children are always monitored by sight or sound. (Educators may require an Educator Assistant to accompany them on an excursion).
3. Implement scanning - a skill that involves regularly glancing around the indoor and outdoor spaces to see children's involvement and what is happening.
4. Use redirection - a skill used as an aid in preventing undesirable and unsafe behaviour. Children are redirected to other areas/ activities when undesirable behaviour is imminent or occurs. This technique helps to ensure the safety of all children.
5. Provide supervision for all children in areas that are near equipment where injury may occur. This requires the use of the above methods and being in close proximity to the children. Children waiting to be picked up due to illness or injury are kept safe, comfortable and under close supervision.
6. Implement quality Interactions – Educators will engage in meaningful interactions with children to promote learning during play and routine times.
7. Implement consistent supervision strategies and not perform other duties while responsible for the supervision of children.
8. Be aware of the importance of communicating with children about their location within the environment.
9. Collaborate with the Coordinators or Nominated Supervisor to develop a risk management plan if any aspect of the environment is identified as a risk to children. This should include:
 - a. Identify any hazard
 - b. Consider the risks to children eg. having visitors present
 - c. Identify the likelihood and consequences (Risk Matrix)
 - d. Controls – what can you put in place – use hierarchy of control
 - e. Apply and reconsider – have the controls reduced the risk – consequences and likelihood
 - f. If this reduces the risk – implemented
 - g. Evaluate this plan at least every three months or more regularly if any aspect of the plan changes or other hazards is identified.

2.5.7 Overnight Care Consideration

In the event a child requires overnight care (refer to 2.4 Visitors to the Educators Home and Service Office Procedure and 2.6 Identifying and Responding to abuse) the Nominated Supervisor and/or Coordinator will:

Undertake a risk assessment of the care situation which will include a visit to the Educator's residence to complete a risk management plan.

Consideration is given to the environment, bedding and appropriateness of sleep arrangements for the provision of overnight sleep eg. the room in which the child sleeps shall preferably be a bedroom but in any case, shall not be used as a thoroughfare and where a child regularly stays overnight, will be provided with their own bed and linen.

- Consider if the environment is appropriate given age of the child/ren. Ensure no child will sleep in a room with a child of the opposite sex for overnight care unless they are siblings. Gain written parental approval before any child is able to sleep overnight and in the same room with any other child or (in case of an infant) with an Educator and another adult (Educator's partner) in the presence of the Educator.
- How the Educator will provide supervision: what strategies has the Educator considered eg. the child who stays overnight will have access to the Educator at all times – know they can call out and have the Educator respond. The Educator will have a baby monitor to be used while child/ren are sleeping, positioned in the same room as where the Educator is sleeping. This will be on the same level of the house to the child.
- Do other children live at the residence and/or who might be present at the time of the overnight sleep stay? What are the risks involved in these circumstances and how are these mitigated to ensure safety of the child/ren?
- What role will the Service play in the protection of children e.g. Note how the Service will monitor and ensure controls are in place and maintained for overnight care situation, for example:
 - o Regular unannounced visits to the Educator's residence during the overnight period
 - o Check in with families about their child's experience.

Risk Assessment will involve both the Educator and family:

1. Identify the hazard to the child's safety.
2. Assess the risks of harm to the child – likelihood and consequences.
3. Controls which could be put in place to reduce or eliminate the risk.
4. Re-assess the risk of harm to the child – do these controls reduce or eliminate the risk? If the risk remains high, this activity will not take place and alternative measures must be considered or alternative care offered if available.

5. Document the findings on the Child Protection Risk Management Plan.
6. Talk through the process and the plan with the Educator before the sleepover occurs.
7. Engage with the Educator to ensure all controls are in place and they are confident in maintaining the agreed plan.
8. The Coordinator will approve after the 7 steps above are completed. The Educator and parent will sign the Risk Management Plan.
9. Monitor the circumstances and re-assess the situation as required (after an unannounced visit) and discuss this with the Educator as required.

Review

	Date	Details
Revision 00	07/2015	Original Policy Issued
Revision 01	12/2016	Reviewed
Revision 02	08/2017	Reviewed
Revision 03	11/2020	Reviewed and separated from Policy

Related Documents

Policies

2.2 Child Protection

Procedures

2.1 Interactions with Children

2.2 Guiding Children's Behaviour

2.4 Visitors to the Educators Home and Service Office Procedure

2.6 Identifying and Responding to Abuse

Forms

Children Protection Risk Management Plan

Active Supervision risk minimisation plan

References

Refer to 2.2 Child Protection Policy