

PROVIDING A CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY



Policy Statement

All children have the right to access a safe environment with educators who promote, uphold and advocate for children's health, safety, security and wellbeing. This Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in maintaining a safe and suitable environment for children and adults at the Service.

Strategies and Practices

- The *Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy* is available to families upon enrolment and staff upon induction.
- The Service's building, facilities, furniture and equipment meet legislative requirements and those of all relevant national and state regulatory bodies, local council, and the Building Code of Australia.
- Play equipment has been installed strictly according to manufacturers' recommendations. All fixed equipment meets the Australian/New Zealand Safety Standards and is well maintained.
- The Approved Provider is contacted with any maintenance issues that are required and these are logged on the master maintenance list located on the LAEL Management network share. Appropriate action is taken in order to maintain resources, equipment and furniture.
- Educators complete a Daily Tasks Checklist before the Service opens to ensure the environment is safe for children. Educators also complete a Daily Tasks Checklist when the service closes to ensure that all tasks have been completed, all children have been signed out, there is no one left in the building and the service is ready to be locked.
- Should any matter requiring immediate attention be identified during the educators' checks, educators will fix, remove or isolate the hazard and notify the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person immediately. This hazard will be dealt with appropriately and information will then be communicated to the Approved Provider via phone, email and logged on the master maintenance list located on the LAEL Management network share.
- Staff ensure that the Service is safe, clean and well maintained, documenting cleaning carried out on the Cleaning Schedule – Playrooms and Bathrooms daily as well as the Resource Cleaning Record within each room.
- Additional thorough cleaning of affected play space furniture and resources is completed whenever an infectious disease is reported or suspected to minimise the possibility of any cross contamination.
- All equipment (e.g. cots, highchairs, prams) used by children is regularly cleaned and serviced.
- Contract cleaners are employed to clean the service on a daily basis and have a schedule of tasks to complete (see Attachment 1).
- Children are not required to wear shoes when in the outdoor play spaces; however, at times they may be encouraged to do so if surface temperatures appear hot or if weather is cold. Children may also be encouraged to wear shoes when participating in experiences such as building with hammers.
- Educators move equipment according to the weather and temperature to ensure children's safety. For example, mats will be moved into the shade as it moves through the yard.
- Educators follow the Emergency and Evacuation Policy and procedures if a hazard is identified during operating hours.
- Families are required to maintain supervision of their children until they hand their child over to an educator upon drop off and once collected from an educator when leaving the service. Siblings who do not attend the service, but attend the service to drop off/collect their sibling must remain with parent/authorised contact at all times.

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- The service has an 'Adults Only' practice regarding opening doors throughout the service, and we ask families to adhere to this.
- Families must never leave children without adult supervision in their cars or in the car park while they are inside the service
- Educators review both the indoor and outdoor play space Supervision Plans as required/annually in consultation with children. This includes reflection of the simultaneous use of the play spaces during the Indoor/Outdoor segment of the daily routine.
- The service' outdoor play spaces are adequately shaded. Each room of the service has access to a large verandah which can be used as additional shade as well as a space to play when it is raining.
- Educators acknowledge the benefits of accessing technology to support children's learning however any Internet use is supervised, and suitability for children is screened.
- Sufficient numbers of educators are employed to ensure adequate supervision of children at all times. Rosters are managed to ensure that required ratios are met, experienced educators are present equally throughout operational times, and that children have access to familiar educators and so that a safe environment can be provided.
- Educators empower children to express whenever they feel behaviour towards them is unsafe or not acceptable and guide them to respond appropriately.
- The Service ensures that screening and suitability of staff and volunteers is conducted prior to employment/engagement at the service. All staff students and volunteers must hold current Working with Children Checks and the Service verifies the status of these checks before commencement at the service. A record of these checks and their expiry dates are kept on each educator, student and volunteers file and in the staff record folder. All staff members undergo mandatory police criminal history checks prior to employment.
- The service is committed to providing a safe and inclusive place for children by implementing the NSW Child Safe Standards outlined by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian. See Attachment 4. The oversight and regulatory mechanisms aimed at protecting children and young people will be adhered to and any breach of our policies, procedures and code of conduct, which compromises the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children may lead to disciplinary action. In the event of a breach of the law, the matter will be reported to NSW Police or other relevant government agency. See Attachments 2 and 3.
- Educators uphold the rights of all children to participate to their full capacity, regardless of their gender, race, ability or cultural background.
- All educators at the service are Mandatory Reporters and will follow the services Child Protection Policy if they have reasonable grounds to suspect a child or young person is at risk of significant harm and have current concern about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person. Every staff member at the Service holds or is enrolled to complete Child Protection training. The Service maintains an up-to-date record of these qualifications and ensures that they are renewed before their expiry date.
- Every staff member at the service holds or is enrolled to complete first aid, anaphylaxis and asthma management qualifications. The Service maintains an up-to-date record of these qualifications and ensures that they are renewed before their expiry date.
- All educators, students and volunteers are provided with a thorough induction and orientation to the service, ensuring that they are familiar with policies, procedures and the importance of maintaining children's safety at all times.
- Educators must follow the Services *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy* to ensure that the only people that are collecting children from the service are those who are listed as authorised collection contacts in the child's enrolment record or those that have been given prior permission from an authorised contact.

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References

- *Education and Care Services National Law*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
- Australian Child Care Alliance NSW –
<https://nsw.childcarealliance.org.au/members/policies-required-under-regulation-168>
- Dr Brenda Abbey (Childcare by Design)
- Oversight and regulatory mechanisms aimed at protecting children and young people
https://www.ocg.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/807/Regulatory_Oversight.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y
- Office of Children's Guardian - Understanding and Developing a Child Safe Policy
- ACECQA Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy Guidelines

Policy Review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities, where necessary, as part of the review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Attachment 1

LAEL Cleaning Scope of Works

Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday – Indoors

- Door handles, light & fan switches wiped – all rooms
- Bench tops, sinks, taps cleaned – all rooms
- Indoor windows, sills and glass – all rooms
- Vacuum mats, carpets and floors – whole centre
- Mop floors – rinse mop head and bucket after use – all rooms
- Clean all toilets and hand basins – including staff and disabled
- Foyer glass door – inside and outside

Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday – Outdoors

- Bubblers and sinks cleaned
- Windows in all playrooms and childrens bathrooms

Weekly – Indoors

- Phones & Intercom bases and handsets wiped – all rooms

Weekly – Outdoors

- Green Council Bin – cleaned inside and out (out Tuesday night for collection Wednesday)

As needed – Indoors

- Fan blades wiped – all rooms
- Windows – in all other rooms
- Cobwebbing indoors – all rooms

As needed – Outdoors

- Cobwebbing outdoors – building
- Sweeping/hosing pathways & car park area
- Ezy Waste bins x 2

NOTE: NO SMOKING ON SITE INCLUDING CAR PARK

Require a copy of all SDS sheets for the chemicals used for approval for safety around children.

Attachment 2



Oversight and regulatory mechanisms aimed at protecting children and young people

In NSW there are many oversight and regulatory mechanisms that function to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children.



Child Safe Organisations

Office of the Children's Guardian

Child Safe Standards	OOHC and Adoption Accreditation	Voluntary OOHC Registration	Carers Register	Capability Building and Support
The Child Safe Standards provide a framework for child safe organisations. All organisations working with children should implement them.	Out-of-home care (OOHC) and adoption agencies must meet Child Safe Standards and be accredited by the OCG to provide services to children.	Organisations that provide overnight care to children and young people in certain circumstances must be registered with the OCG.	A centralised database of carers authorised to provide statutory or supported OOHC in NSW.	Staff and volunteers can utilise training, resources and templates to implement the Child Safe Standards. Dedicated coordinators work with priority sectors.
Working With Children Check	Reportable Conduct	Children's Employment	Community Visitors	Further work
Child-related organisations must use the Working With Children Check to support the recruitment of people suitable to work with children.	Organisations are oversighted when they notify and investigate certain allegations about how an employee, volunteer or contractor has acted towards a child.	Employers in the entertainment and modelling industry are regulated to prevent child exploitation and abuse.	Independent appointees visit and report on out-of-home care services for children and young people in residential care placements.	The OCG is working to develop a regulatory scheme to implement the Child Safe Standards, and to create a Residential Care Workers Register.

Other regulators

Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate (Department of Education) – Early education and care service are monitored, regulated, assessed and rated to ensure children are kept safe and secure. Services are assessed under the National Quality Framework.

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission – Registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) providers, including those providing services to children, are monitored against the NDIS Code of Conduct and Practice Standards.

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Attachment 3

Early Childhood Education and Care Reporting Obligations

Staff and volunteers who work in Early Childhood Education and Care have reporting obligations related to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children. They apply to all ECEC service types including long day care, family day care, outside school hours care, preschool, occasional care and mobile services. These reporting obligations exist to protect children from abuse or other harm that may occur while they are in the care of the organisation or elsewhere. Reports often need to be made to more than one agency, as the following chart explains.

 NSW Police Force Make a report to police if the matter involves conduct towards a child that you suspect may be criminal in nature. For emergencies call 000 For police assistance and general enquiries call 131 444 	 Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Communities and Justice Make a report to DCJ if you suspect a child is at risk of significant harm. Types of abuse include neglect, sexual, physical and emotional. Call the Child Protection Helpline on 132 111 	 Reportable Conduct Scheme Office of the Children's Guardian Notify reportable allegations against staff, certain volunteers and contractors within 7 working days. For advice and support contact 02 8219 3800 reportableconduct@ocg.nsw.gov.au 	 NSW Regulatory Authority Education Notify incidents, complaints and allegations via the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS). You can also call 1800 619 113 or email ececd@det.nsw.edu.au 	 Organisational response Every concerning matter is an opportunity for your organisation to strengthen its child safe practices and culture. This includes assessing and reviewing relevant policies and procedures. For support implementing child safe practices contact the Office of the Children's Guardian on 02 8219 3600 
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If you're not sure about if you need to make a report, please speak with your manager as a priority.

 **Office of the Children's Guardian**

Locked Bag 5100
Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
ocg.nsw.gov.au
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Attachment 4

Little Adventures Early Learning

is committed to implementing the Child Safe Standards.

