



# Supervision of Children Procedure

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## **Policy**

The Supervision of Children Procedure falls under the Interactions with Children Policy. Hawthorn Early Years (HEY) has a strong commitment to respectful relationships, which nurture and teach. They are at the heart of our educational program. Educators develop positive, caring and responsive relationships with every child to ensure they feel secure, and to create effective executive functioning skills to build respectful relationships with others. We recognise children as bearers of rights, capable and competent of participating in society through their relationships with others.

## **Application of Procedure**

This policy applies to all employees, students, volunteers, families, children and others attending the programs and experiences of Hawthorn Early Years.

## **Hawthorn Early Years is committed to:**

Providing a safe and secure environment for children through the provision of Adequate Supervision in accordance with regulations.

## **Hawthorn Early Years will:**

### **Training and Support**

Ensure staffing rosters allow compliance with the legislated educator-to-child ratios at all times.

Conduct supervision training annually and as part of the induction process for all educators and volunteers.

Employ designated educational leaders who will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating supervision practices in consultation with teaching teams.

### **Notification**

Notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of a Serious Incident occurring at the Service or of a complaint being made alleging the health, safety or wellbeing of a child has been compromised.

Notify parents/guardians of a serious incident involving their child as soon as possible, but not more than 24 hours after the occurrence.



## **Evaluation**

Regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by this policy and procedure regarding its effectiveness.

Record and monitor complaints and incidents in relation to the supervision of children and amend the policy and procedure as required.

Monitor trends to ensure that the premises and facilities are designed and maintained to facilitate supervision of children at all times while maintaining the rights and dignity of all children.

## **All employees, volunteers and students will:**

### **Plan for supervision**

Contribute to their classrooms Supervision Risk Assessment which will form the basis of the classroom Supervision Plan. Classroom Leaders will be responsible for ensuring a Supervision Risk Assessment has been conducted and that this is updated as needed.

Contribute to classroom specific Supervision Plans which are created at the start of every year and systematically reviewed during classroom meetings each term. Classroom leaders will be responsible for leading this process and will have Supervision Plans approved by their educational leader. The Supervision Plan will address specific supervision strategies as identified in their classroom Supervision Risk assessment as well as strategies outlined in this procedure. The Supervision Plan will address the following variables:

- number, age and abilities of children
- number and positioning of educators (zoning systems for shared spaces)
- areas and experiences which require higher supervision such as bathrooms
- developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- the experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- the need for educators to be moving between areas (effective communication strategies).
- design and arrangement of the environment and permanent learning areas
- times of the day that require specific strategies.

### **Provide adequate supervision**

Provide Adequate Supervision (refer to *Definitions*) at all times using the following strategies:

#### **A. Setting up the environment**

Consider the set up the environment so that children can be monitored actively and diligently at all times. This includes considering the position of observation windows and mirrors, children's



lockers and the iPad when deciding on where to position experiences that will need the greatest supervision.

Ensure there are clear walkways for easy access between experiences and that the majority of furniture is at a height that allows for educators to be able to see and hear children. Where this is not possible specific supervision strategies will be introduced to manage this risk.

Consider staff:child ratios and group dynamics when making decisions about which environments to utilise at any given time. Whilst the Services philosophy is to maintain an indoor/outdoor program for as much of the day as possible, safety considerations such as maintaining adequate supervision must be the priority. If multiple areas can't be adequately supervised then educators must decide which environment to utilise and communicate effectively about this to other team members and children.

Ensure that the environment is set up to support supervision. For example; if an indoor/outdoor program is not in operation then the doors between the classroom and outdoor play area should remain closed. Visual cues can also be used to assist such as stop/go signs on doors or pictures of children with an adult to reinforce messages such as it's only safe to be outside when there is an educator present.

#### B. Positioning

Always face the children and identify appropriate positions that allow for maximum supervision of children and the environment, e.g. back facing the wall/fence and not to children.

Carefully plan where to position themselves to be in close proximity to supervise experiences that involve some risk i.e. wood working, water, playing at heights etc. whilst still being able to see and hear all children, especially children in the bathroom area.

Position themselves so that they can be close to children who may need additional support and make sure there are always clear paths to where children are playing, sleeping, toileting and eating so they can reach children quickly when necessary.

Ensure that at least one educator is supervising and available to the children at all times. For example; classrooms could combine at either end of the day so that pack up duties can be done without compromising supervision where there are fewer educators on duty.

Position themselves according to Supervision Plans and anchor points so that children are adequately supervised. Educators must only cluster together to talk when necessary for the care and education of children and this must not impact supervision.

#### C. Scanning and counting

Regularly scan the area to observe all children in the environment, knowing where every child is and what they are doing. This includes being alert to sounds that may indicate a problem or need for intervention or assistance.



Be aware of the number of children in their direct care and count the children frequently checking that these align with attendance records on the tablet and printed roll. This is especially important during transitions when children are moving from one location to another and during arrival or departure times. Head counts should be completed and confirmed by a second educator to ensure accuracy.

Always conduct head counts when transitioning children between spaces and ensure the space is not vacated until it is established that all children have been accounted for. This includes employing **multiple** strategies including physically checking that no children are left in the space being vacated as well as conducting a head count and having this head count also completed by a second educator.

Be alert to and aware of what is going on around them including the potential for accidents, injuries and other harmful incidents throughout the whole area and service, not just within their own immediate area.

Be accountable for supervising all children and not just the children in their own classroom. Educators must have a team approach to adequately supervising children in shared play spaces and spread out to supervise all areas.

Ensure all children are accounted for by referring to attendance records and conducting head counts at various times throughout the day, both before and after outdoor experiences and before leaving at the end of their shift. This must be communicated between educators.

#### D. Anticipating behaviour

Have knowledge of children, including knowing each child's range of skills, interests, ability to interact with others and developmental stage. Educators use what they know about each child's individual interests and skills to predict what they will do.

Create challenges that children are ready for and support them in succeeding but, also recognise when children might wander, become distressed or be in a hazardous situation.

#### E. Engage and redirect

Use their knowledge about each child's individual needs and development to offer support. Educators must determine when to interrupt and redirect children's play or when to allow children to problem-solve on their own before offering support. They will offer different levels of assistance or redirection depending on each individual child's needs.

### **Manage Risk**

Effectively supervise groups of children by conducting supervision risk assessments and making professional judgements to determine the best approach to supervision at any given time. Risk assessments/professional judgements will be used to determine the level of supervision that is required for particular situations. For example, an educator may recognise that a particular



experience that involves some risk, such as carpentry, requires close attention. Alternatively, if children are participating in low risk experiences, the educator can focus their attention on engaging with children.

At all times be active in their supervision of children and not have their responsibilities compromised by engaging in other duties, for example, cleaning and administrative tasks. In order to achieve this at least one educator must be nominated to be directly and actively supervising the children whilst the second educator engages in any other duties if this is required. Regular communication and scanning of the environment is required from both educators so that the person not directly supervising children can return to active supervision as needed.

Provide direct and constant supervision when a child is near water, eating, drinking or toileting.

Maintain a duty of care to children at all times (including when the child is on the premises but not signed into or out of the care of the Service and the parent/guardian or person delivering or collecting the child is responsible for supervising that child).

Supervise children's daily departure from the Service ensuring that the person who collects the child has the authority to collect the child (Refer to Arrival & Departure Procedure for further information).

Refrain from holding personal conversation during teaching times and will not enter other classrooms while on designated breaks to ensure educator's full attention is on supervision and interactions with children.

Ensure doors and gates are closed at all times to prevent children from leaving the Service unaccompanied or from accessing unsupervised/unsafe areas of the Service.

Identify high-risk experiences, including excursions, through a risk assessment process, and implement strategies specifying how these risks will be managed and minimised e.g. increasing adult-to-child ratios above regulatory requirements.

Conduct regular safety checks of the environment to assess for safety and to remove any hazards. Children will not be taken outdoors unless the outdoor checklist has been completed.

### **Supervision of sleeping children**

Consider the supervision requirements of sleeping children by assessing each child's circumstances and needs to determine any risk factors. For example, because a higher risk may be associated with infants or children with colds or chronic lung disorders, they might require a higher level of supervision while sleeping. Sleeping children will always be within sight and/or hearing distance so that educators can assess the child's breathing and colour of their skin to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Rooms that are very dark and have music playing may not provide adequate supervision of sleeping children. Supervision windows should be kept clear and not painted over or covered with curtains or posters (for further information refer to the Sleep Rest and Relaxation Procedure).



## **Supervision of children during nappy changes**

Make adequate preparations prior to changing a nappy so that supervision of children is maintained throughout the nappy change. Educators will ensure that all of the required equipment is available and within reach prior to beginning a nappy change ritual. During a nappy change, a child will never be left alone on the change table and physical contact will always be maintained with the child such as placing one hand on the child while reaching for a nappy (for further information refer to the Hygiene Procedure).

Ensure another educator is available to actively supervise any other children when changing a nappy. Communication between educators will be needed to ensure supervision can be maintained. This may mean reducing the number of spaces where children can access to ensure all children are actively supervised.

## **Communication**

Communicate and collaborate with one another often to ensure children are adequately supervised. This is necessary to ensure educators know where their colleagues are in the classroom environment and how this may effect supervision of children.

Inform casual and relief educators about the supervision strategies outlined in this procedure and their classroom Supervision Plan as part of the classroom induction process.

Provide immediate and direct feedback to team members, agency and casual educators and volunteers regarding supervision practices.

Notify another team member before leaving the environment where they are responsible for supervising children.

## **Notification**

Notify a member of the Management Team immediately in the event of a Serious Incident occurring at the Service or of a complaint being made alleging the health, safety or wellbeing of a child has been compromised.

## **Parents/guardians will:**

Ensure that doors and gates, including playground gates, are closed after entry or exit.

Be aware of the movement of other children near gates and doors when entering or exiting the Service and only allow their own children to pass through manually operated doors and gates with them.



Supervise their own children before signing them into the program and after they have signed them out of the program.

Supervise other children in their care, including siblings, while attending or assisting at the Service.

Ensure classroom educators are aware that their child has arrived or departed.

Enable educators to supervise children at all times by only speaking with them about day-to-day child related matters during arrival and departure times. More detailed conversations relating to sensitive issues require either:

- relief by another educator
- an appointment made to discuss concerns away from the children's classroom environment

### See also:

1. Interactions with Children Policy
2. Interactions with Children Procedure
3. Delivery and Collection of Children Procedure
4. Child Safe Procedure
5. Clothing Procedure

### Definitions:

**Adequate supervision:** entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. 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 are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary.

**Serious incident:** An incident resulting in the death of a child, or an injury, trauma or illness for which the attention of a registered medical practitioner, emergency services or hospital is sought or should have been sought. This also includes an incident in which a child appears to be missing, cannot be accounted for, is removed from the service in contravention of the regulations or is mistakenly locked in/out of the service premises (Regulation 12).

**Duty of care:** A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

**Hazard:** A source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.