Early Learning
Supervision of Children Policy

1. Policy Statement

All decisions made by educators and Uniting Victoria & Tasmania are guided by a commitment to children's safety, rights, and best interests being of paramount importance.

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- Ensuring all children are effectively supervised by educators employed or engaged by the service in all aspects of the service program
- Maintaining a duty of care to all children
- Ensuring there is an understanding of the, shared legal responsibility and accountability, and a commitment by all persons to implement the procedures and practices outlined in this policy
- Upholding and complying with the Child Safe Standards
- Taking all reasonable practical actions and steps to avoid causing injury to persons to meet duty of care responsibilities.

2. Executive Summary

Ensuring children are safe while they participate in early childhood education and care settings is a fundamental professional responsibility that enables children to learn and grow. Supervision practices maximise children's safe engagement in the learning environment and ensure their needs are met in timely and responsive ways. These practices are part of educators' and leaders' duty of care responsibilities under Australia's National Law and Regulations and underpin our collective commitment to quality and continuous improvement.

3. Current Environmental Context

Supervision of children in early childhood education and care has increasingly been described as active supervision. In response to the growing complexity of working in early childhood settings, a new term has emerged—dynamic supervision—placing particular emphasis on the need for flexible, responsive supervision that adapts to changing environments, activities and children's needs. Dynamic supervision recognises the importance of professional judgement and adaptability, with both being essential for creating safe and supportive environments for children.

Dynamic supervision is essential for ensuring children's safety and wellbeing. It involves ongoing communication between team members, enabling educators to position themselves effectively—both near children and each other—for continuous observation and active engagement. Building on the foundations of active supervision, dynamic supervision recognises the need to adapt in real time to changes in children's behaviour, developmental needs, group dynamics, environments and routines.

By staying connected and sharing awareness, educators can provide flexible, responsive supervision during play, routines and transitions. A clear, planned approach allows educators to move spontaneously and purposefully in response to emerging needs and risks, while maintaining compliance with staff-to-child ratios. This supports high-quality practice, including effective supervision, risk assessment and prompt intervention across the learning environment.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, wealth, birth status or ability. When children experience nurturing and respectful reciprocal

relationships with educators, they develop an understanding of themselves as competent, capable and respected. Relationships are the foundation for the construction of identity, and help shape children's thinking about who they are, how they belong and what influences them *(Early Years Learning Framework, p. 20; Framework for School Age Care, p. 19)*

'Constructive everyday interactions and shared learning opportunities form the basis of equitable, respectful and reciprocal relationships between educators and children. Educators who are actively engaged in children's learning and share decision-making with them, use their everyday interactions during play, routines and ongoing projects to stimulate children's thinking and to enrich their learning. These relationships provide a solid foundation from which to guide and support children as they develop the self-confidence and skills to manage their own behaviour, make decisions and relate positively and effectively to others.' *(Guide to National Quality Framework)*

Child Safe Standard 3 requires services to have strategies to empower children about their rights, ensure children can participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously. When children feel respected and valued, they are much more likely to speak up about issues of safety and wellbeing. Enabling and promoting empowerment and the participation of children within a service has multiple benefits in addition to enhancing the safety of children, including demonstrating a commitment to upholding the rights of children, checking that what the service is doing is what children want and building the communication and leadership skills of children.

Safe and respectful interactions between adults and children are supported by robust workforce screening, professional conduct expectations and compliance with Working with Children requirements. The service will maintain systems to verify workforce suitability and comply with Working with Children Connect obligations to support child safety and ongoing workforce monitoring.

4. Review

This policy will be reviewed by: February 2029

5. Reference/Sources

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Uniting Policies

Child Safety Policy
Child Safety Code of Conduct
Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Procedure
Workplace Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Early Learning Policies

Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy
Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy
Excursions Regular Outings and Service Events Policy
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Interactions with Children Policy
Relaxation and Sleep Policy
Road Safety Policy - Transportation as passenger, cyclists & pedestrians
Safe Arrival of Children Policy
Staffing Policy
Water Safety Policy

Related legislation/References

Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe standards) Act 2015
Children's Services Amendment Act 2019
Children's Services Regulations 2020
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
National Quality Standard
Tasmanian Licensing Standards for Centre Based Child Care Class 5 2014 (0-12 years)
Tasmanian Work Health and Safety Act 2011
The Royal Children's Hospital Community Information team
Kidsafe: Childsafe Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia
AdequateSupervision-poster-landscape.pdf
Taking a risk to play safely | ACECQA
Risk assessment in practice | ACECQA
Dynamic-Supervision-FA.pdf

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency Staff, Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Comply with this policy *R170*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Inform parents and volunteers at the service about the Supervision of Children Policy and the ways that they can adhere to its procedures *R171*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Develop and implement induction procedures to inform new, casual and relief staff about the supervision strategies outlined in this policy	✓	✓	✓		✓
Comply with the legislative educator-to-child ratios at all times, and that relevant educators have required qualifications *S169*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Count only those educators who are working directly with children at the service in the educator-to-child ratios *S169*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure volunteers, students, visitors and support people are not responsible for the supervision of children *S170*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
With the exception of Family Day Care and single staff services, ensure a minimum of two educators are rostered on duty at all times children are in attendance at the service *S169*	**R**	✓	✓		
Ensure any educator under the age of 18 is not left to supervise children on their own *S170 R119 & 120*	**R**	✓	✓		
Keeping a record of ECT/educators working directly with children *R151*	**R**	✓	✓		
Ensure an unauthorised person is under the direct supervision of an ECT/educator whilst at the service *S 167 & 170*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Carefully plan rosters to ensure educators are always available to respond to children *S 165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		
Know the layout of the environment to help you supervise effectively *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Arrange the environment to ensure maximum visibility and accessibility, while maintaining good flow around furniture and opportunities for large and small group play *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Using child and adult-sized furniture at waist height can allow for a clear view across learning spaces, from various angles and can be easily rearranged to accommodate different interests, needs and abilities of children *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓

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Position yourself to maintain a clear, wide view and respond quickly to potential risks *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Collaborate and communicate with other educators and decide on the best positions for supervision. This includes when educators are supporting children with care routines, starting a new activity or during arrival and departure times *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Maintain situational awareness of the location of Educators and children ensuring that all zones are supervised *S165 & 167*	**R**				
Tailor your approach to suit different types of play and learning experiences, from quiet to highly active *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Stay alert to group dynamics, emotional cues and emerging hazards that may require a change in strategy *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure that children being educated and cared for by the service are dynamically supervised (refer to Glossary) at all times by being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times; including during eating, toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Listen carefully to children and noting any changes of tone or volume in their voice *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Listen to the language of other educators for cues (such as signs of fatigue or tiredness) that might mean support, engagement or redirection is needed *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Identify signs of potential danger by paying attention to the sounds, or the absence of sounds in children's play, for example splashing water, crying, gasping, changes in language, or silence	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Manage the risks of abuse or harm to each child, including fulfilling duty of care and legal obligations to protect children and prevent any reasonable, foreseeable risk of injury or harm *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Record incidents thoughtfully to reflect on and strengthen supervision practices *S165 & 167*	**R**		✓		✓
Notify the Regulatory Authority via RiskMan within 12 hours of any serious incident (refer to *Glossary)*, complaint alleging the health, safety or wellbeing of a child has been compromised or that a law has been breached *S174*	**R**	✓	✓		✓

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Notify parents/guardians of a serious incident involving their child as soon as possible, but not more than 12 hours after the occurrence *R86*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure dynamic supervision standards are maintained during educator breaks, including during lunch breaks *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Maintain a duty of care to children at all times (including when the child is on the premises but not signed into or signed out of the care of the service and the parent/guardian or person delivering or collecting the child is responsible for supervising that child) *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Work as a team to supervise children's daily departure from the service and be aware of the person who has authority to collect the child (refer to Delivery and Collection of Children policy) *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Balance supervision requirements with children's needs for privacy and independence	✓	✓	✓		✓
Strengthening supervision capability and shared understanding through induction, mentoring and professional learning	✓	✓	✓		
Provide support to ECT/educators when children with challenging behaviours or children who require specific or extra support to participate fully in a program are involved	✓	✓			✓
Regularly review risk assessments to determine the level of supervision for specific situations and identify the best locations and approaches to supervision *S165, 167, R100 & 101*	**R**				✓
Ensure that all children are accounted for, including by referring to attendance records at various times throughout the day, e.g. during indoor/outdoor programs *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Be aware of the movement of other children near gates and doors when entering or exiting the service or family day care home S165, *167 & R99 & 102*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure doors and gates are closed at all times, to prevent children from leaving the service, family day care home/venue unaccompanied or from accessing unsupervised/unsafe areas of the service *S165,167 R99 & 102*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓

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In collaboration with children establish the physical boundaries of the Nature Program *R155*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Empower children and encourage them to take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others *R155*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Involve children and young people in their own safety, such as understanding boundaries and contributing to agreements that support supervision *R73*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Decide when to interrupt and redirect children's play to ensure safety at all times *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Conduct and record daily safety checks of the environment to assess safety and to remove hazards *S167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Prepare for routines such as nappy change in advance ensuring that all of the required equipment is available and within reach prior to undertaking a nappy change *S167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Provide direct and constant supervision when a child is near water *S165 & 167*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Conduct a risk assessment prior to an excursion, regular outing, Nature Program and service event to identify risks to health, safety or wellbeing, and specify how these risks will be managed and minimised *R100 & 101*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Follow the incident reporting and escalation process (refer to the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy) and notify the Responsible Person in the event of a serious incident or notifiable complaint (refer to Glossary). Examples include when a child appears to be missing or is unaccounted for, or a complaint has been made alleging the health, safety or wellbeing of a child has been compromised *S174*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Report to the responsible person where circumstances: do not allow for adequate supervision, require maintenance to the building and/or equipment and provide tripping hazards *R115*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Educate families on the importance of supervision and their contribution to keeping all children and young people safe whilst in the service		✓	✓		

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At OSHC programs, educators will ensure that they accompany children using public toilets when away from the facility *S165 & S167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
At OSHC programs, educators will alert other educators if they need to use the toilet to ensure continuous supervision *S165 & S167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
At OSHC programs, educators will respect children's age and need for independence when actively supervising in an OSHC setting *R155*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
At OSHC programs, educators will vigilantly supervise hygiene hand washing requirements		✓	✓		✓
At OSHC programs, educators will inform new and relief staff about supervision requirements and any behaviour support plans in regard to supervision expectations *S165 & S167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
At OSHC programs, educators will ensure that no visitors, volunteers or incursion providers are left alone with students *S165, S167 & S169*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure educators are aware that your child has arrived at or departed from the service or family day care home				✓	
Enable educators to supervise children at all times by making arrangements to speak with them outside program hours				✓	
Supervise own children before signing them into the program and after having signed them out				✓	
Supervise other children in your care, including siblings, while attending or assisting at the service, including in the vicinity of the service, i.e. service carpark.				✓	

Early Childhood Australia's Dynamic Supervision examples

Practice Examples	Active Supervision	Dynamic Supervision
Outdoor play	Observing a child on the climbing frame, able to step in to assist if and when required.	Notices a smaller child approach climbing frame, moves to the frame and positions themselves to support.
Water play	Within arm's reach of the set-up. Proactive in communication with children.	Educators are part of the play and strategically increase the number of educators involved as more children join the play
Transition times	Communicate with children about what's to come, ratio check before and after, supporting children in the moment while continuing to scan the environment.	Pre-planned and anticipated the needs of children (individual needs/routines) to transition before such needs as a child's sleep. Provides additional support to children with individual care or support plans
Mealtimes	Educators observe children, have conversations about foods, are engaged with children and close by to support.	Educators position themselves to be with or near children who have allergies, having conversations and reminders of how to be safe (not sharing food), children who have had changes in their needs (moved from a highchair to table and chairs). Educators have assigned roles and functions during mealtimes, educators sit at the table with children; one educator is positioned to serve meals and offer additional servings.
Arrival and departure	Greets all children and families, acknowledges their arrival/departure.	Identifies children or families that need time and support, calls out to team members to provide support or reallocate role/position in room.

Supervision risk management template

Area/equipment	Potential supervision risk	Action to reduce or eliminate risk
Fixed equipment e.g. swings, fixed climbing equipment, slides etc.		
Layout of the internal and/or external areas of the service including a description of areas that provide challenges to supervision e.g. children's bathrooms, L-shaped playgrounds or playrooms, behind structures or features in the playground etc.		
Staff supervision responsibilities including: quiet/active learning spaces; during indoor and outdoor programs; specific programmed experiences; and the supervision of students and volunteers		
Potential hazards e.g. protruding tree roots, small pieces of equipment etc.		
Review the effectiveness of the risk management plan and review children's participation (at staff meetings and as required after a near miss or incident)		
Arrival and departure of children		
Identify children who may require additional support and supervision to participate safely in the program		
Ensure clear supervision communication between educators		