

Child Safe Environment Policy

All children have the right to be safe at home, at school and in their early childhood service. The provision of safe environments for children is essential to prevent injury and enable them to grow and develop to their full potential. The management and staff of Burton OSHC and Vacation Care service have a duty of care to provide a child safe care environment (National Childcare Accreditation Council).

All of the Burton OSHC and Vacation Care service stakeholders are committed to the provision of a healthy, safe 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, or suspecting, any allegations of abuse or neglect of children.

The policy will be implemented in the following manner; where advice is needed in relation to any aspect of the following information, questions should be directed to the Education & Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board of South Australia:

Physical Environment

- The premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and in good repair. There is a system in place for monitoring and maintaining the premises, furniture and equipment.
- For each child in care there is a minimum of 3.25 square metres of unencumbered indoor play space that is suitable for children.
- 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 and 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.
- 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 areas.

Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment

- All children are being educated and cared for in an environment free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol.
- The nominated supervisor, educators, other staff and volunteers of the service are not affected by alcohol when the service is operating.
- 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 the children when the service is operating.

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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.
- 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.
- Employer and employee obligations in relation to allegations of child abuse are included in educator's handbooks.
- As mandated notifiers, educators and other staff are required to attend approved training in relation to mandatory notification of child abuse. Educators are expected to refresh this training every 3 years as per regulatory requirements.

Dangerous Products

- Where possible, the service uses non-hazardous and non-toxic products in the care environment.
- Any hazardous or toxic cleaning products are 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.

Identifying potential hazards

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

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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 judgement when providing supervision to children, in addition to OSHC requirements for adult to child ratios. The amount of intensity for the 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 (community or school-based)

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The Child-safe Environment Policy relates to:

Regulations	National Quality Standard (NQS)	Other policies / service documentation	Other legislation / guidelines
168	2.2.3, 2.2.1		
103-115 82 & 84 155		Emergency & Evacuation Policy Infectious Diseases & Infestations Policy	Child Protection Act 1993 OHS&W Act DECD Child Protection Policy
		Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy Interactions with Children Policy Staffing Policy Excursions Policy	

Resources and References:

1. Creating Child safe Environments, August 2010 at www.dfc.sa.gov.au
2. DECD Responding to Abuse & Neglect at 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
4. DECD Cyber Safety: Keeping Children Safe in a Connected World at 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
6. Safety in Children's Services Factsheet, Sonja Tansey for NCAC 2006 at www.acecqa.gov.au (go to NCAC archive)
7. Child Protection Policy at www.acecqa.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
9. Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference (2005) *Creating safe environments for children-Organisations, employees and volunteers: National framework.* [www.ocsc.vic.gov.au/downloads/childsafe framework.pdf](http://www.ocsc.vic.gov.au/downloads/childsafe%20framework.pdf)



Burton OSHC

49a Kensington Way, BURTON, SA 5110

Phone: 0488200207

Email: oshc.burton869@schools.sa.edu.au

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