

## Child-Safe Environment Policy

<b>Published</b>	<b>January 2021</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>January 2023</b>
<b>Sources</b>	<p>Education and Care Services National Regulations, October 2017</p> <p>Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations, October 2017</p> <p>Guide to the National Quality Standard, February 2018</p> <p>The Children's Hospital at Westmead <a href="http://www.chw.edu.au">www.chw.edu.au</a> (retrieved 30.10.10)</p> <p>Kidsafe (NSW), Homesafety Factsheet (retrieved 30.10.10)</p>

### Aim:

The service ensures that all aspects of children's safety are protected, and that all Educators and Co-ordination Unit staff are aware of the importance of supervision in Out of School Hours Care to reduce the risk of harm to children.

### Explanation:

Country Kids Club Out of School Hours Care is committed to complying with the Education and Care Services National Regulations to ensure:

- Adult /child ratios are maintained
- The premises and equipment are maintained
- Children are supervised at all times, as supervision is a key aspect to ensuring that children's safety is protected in the service environment
- Consideration is given to the design and arrangement of children's environments to support active supervision
- Supervision is used to reduce or prevent injury to children and adults
- The need for increased supervision when children are involved in high risk activities e.g. an excursion near a significant water hazard is understood and acknowledged
- Children are protected from possible or potential hazards and dangers posed by products, plants, objects, animals and people in the immediate and wider environment
- Plans are in place to manage incidents and emergencies, assist services to protect adults and children and to maintain children's wellbeing and a safe environment

### Service Policies:

The following Policies, Procedures and Guidelines written by Country Kids Club relate directly to maintaining a Child-Safe Environment within the Out of School Hours Care Service and should be used as a reference to compliment this policy:

- Authorisation, delivery & collection
- Child Protection
- Dangerous Products
- Emergency Evacuation
- Excursions
- Supervision
- Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Free Environment
- Water Safety

**Responsibilities:****In relation to Co-ordination Unit Staff:**

- Be aware of their obligations under the current Education and Care Services National Regulations and the National Quality Standard in relation to providing a child-safe environment
- Country Kids Club will only employ Educators who meet the required selection criteria
- Country Kids Club will develop and maintain Policies, Procedures and Guidelines to ensure that Educators comply with the Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Abide by Country Kids Club Policies, Procedures and Guidelines in relation to maintaining a Child-Safe Environment, in particular the policies listed above
- Ensure that Risk Assessments for each venue are conducted annually and reviewed every 6 months

**In relation to Educators:**

- Abide by their obligations under the current Education and Care Services National Regulations and the National Quality Standard in relation to providing a child-safe environment
- Educators must supervise children at all times, having regard to their ages and physical and intellectual development and to the activities in which they are engaged
- Be alert to, and aware of risks and hazards and the potential for accidents and injury throughout the service, not just within their immediate area
- Develop emergency and evacuation procedures for their venue
- Ensure dangerous chemicals, substances and equipment at the venue are inaccessible to children
- Conduct daily hazard checks in and around the venue
- Supervision management strategies need to be outlined for all excursions on the Excursion Safety and hazard Checklist and approved by Country Kids Club
- Abide by Country Kids Club Policies, Procedures and Guidelines in relation to maintaining a Child-Safe Environment, in particular the policies listed above

**In relation to Security:**

- Only approved Educators and management members will be given a key to access the building and equipment areas
- A key register will be maintained that indicates the person's receipt of the key, date received, and date returned on completion of employment, or completion of term as member of Management. If the service is situated on a school site, the service will adhere to the key registry requirements of the school
- Extra keys will only be cut after agreement by the management and a record made of where they are located
- All monies and important documents will be kept in a lockable place and access will only be permitted by approved Educators and staff members
- Educators will ensure that the building is left in a secure manner before leaving and all windows, cupboards, safe, and other relevant areas are locked. All heating and lighting is off and all doors properly secured
- Educators will inform the police and the Co-ordination Unit as soon as possible if there has been a break in to the service of any kind. If a break-in has occurred, educators will remain at the service until the police arrive or inform them of what to do

**In relation to Buildings, Equipment and Maintenance:**

- Equipment will be chosen to meet the children's developmental needs and interests
- There will be sufficient access to furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment suitable for the education and care for each child
- Service premises,, equipment and furniture will be maintained in a safe, clean condition and in good repair at all times
- Children will be provided with adequate, developmentally and age-appropriate toilet, washing and drying facilities. These will enable safe use and convenient access by children
- All plugs, sockets, power cords or extension cords will be kept in good repair, with damaged electrical equipment removed
- All plug sockets shall be maintained as child safe
- Electrical appliances shall be in good working order, with regular test and tagging done to ensure they continue to be safe to use
- Electrical circuit breakers will be installed and be maintained
- The service and equipment will be regularly checked to ensure that they are in a good and safe condition, comply with relevant Australian Standards and have appropriate soft-fall surfacing maintained
- Equipment will be regularly washed and cleaned
- Recycled craft materials will be checked for potential hazards prior to use
- Educators should ensure safe handling of all tools if used as part of any activity
- Families will be encouraged to notify Educators of any safety issues they observe
- Anything that requires maintenance is to be reported to the Nominated Supervisor as soon as possible
- Faulty equipment should be removed or protection placed around any dangerous building sites
- A maintenance book will be kept that records any maintenance that needs to be addressed
- The maintenance book will record:
  - Type of problem
  - Date that it was observed
  - Who notified the Nominated Supervisor and when?
  - What was done to rectify the problem?
  - Date repaired
  - Tradesperson employed to repair the problem
- For urgent repairs the Nominated Supervisor will organise a contractor to attend to the problem
- It is the responsibility of management, once a problem has been raised, to ensure that it is rectified in the most efficient manner, and that the service is safe for educators and clientele
- The service will have an appropriate number of first aid kits that are suitable for the ages and needs of the children attending. The first aid kit will be well stocked and be easily recognised and accessible at all times
- All heating and cooling systems will be of good quality and checked regularly to ensure safety and reliability
- All heating and cooling systems and power cords will be kept in a safe area and away from children
- Educators will take individual needs and specific activities into account when ensuring that heating, ventilation levels are comfortable
- Adequate ventilation will be provided at all times. Windows will be properly maintained to ensure easy opening and protection from bugs and insects
- Where activities involve toxic materials such as paints and glues, staff are to ensure there is adequate ventilation before undertaking the activity

- Adequate light will be maintained both indoors and outdoors
- Outdoor lighting will be suitable so that families, staff and children can enter and exit the building safely

**In relation to Storage:**

- A storage system will be devised that ensures easy access and un-cluttered storage of all equipment
- Storage areas will be cleaned and tidied regularly or as necessary
- Play equipment and toys should be easily accessible to all children during the operating hours of the service
- Children will show respect for the equipment and be expected to pack equipment away that they have finished using to avoid trip hazards
- All equipment is to be neatly packed away at the end of each session
- Craft equipment will be stored in a separate area
- All craft equipment is to be properly washed and cleaned before storage
- Where room permits, a separate storage area will be available for sporting and large outdoor equipment to prevent clutter
- All items such as cleaning materials, disinfectants, flammable, poisonous and other dangerous substances, tools, toiletries, first aid equipment, and medications should be stored in the designated secured area which is inaccessible to the children. Educators are responsible to ensure that these areas remain secure and that they do not inadvertently provide access to these items
- Kitchen and other refuse areas will be provided with lidded facilities that are cleaned and emptied daily
- Educators will ensure that all family records are kept in a nominated secure place, ensuring that records are kept confidential and not left accessible to others during the course of the daily operations

**In relation to Pest Control:**

- Equipment and especially food items will be properly stored so as not to attract pests and vermin
- Refuse bins and disposal areas will be emptied and cleaned daily
- Kitchen, food preparation areas and storage will be cleaned and maintained daily
- All areas will be checked daily for any signs of pests or vermin
- Should any pests or vermin be identified then action should be taken to rid the service of the problem
- Low irritant, environmentally friendly sprays to be used minimally and only with adequate ventilation and preferably not in the presence of the children
- Other methods such as the employment of a pest control company if deemed necessary by management where the above methods have failed
- All families will be notified of any use of chemicals
- Any use of chemical products should only be conducted outside the hours of the children and educators' presence in the building

**In relation to the Indoor Environment:**

- The services indoor environment will be smoke free and no smoking notices will be prominently displayed
- The Nominated Supervisor will only enrol the number of children in the service, which can comfortably fit into the building space and in accordance with the National Regulations

- Where children are indoors for long periods due to weather conditions, special activities will be planned and other areas sought to disperse the group such as school halls and verandas
- Separate areas in the indoor environment will be provided for:
  - Signing children in/out of the service
  - Collection of fees, answering phones, and maintaining daily records
  - Educators and families to talk in confidence
  - Children to store their bags and belongings
  - Storage of equipment, food, dangerous materials, and family records
  - Preparation of food and drinks
  - Kitchen and other refuse
  - Cleaning of equipment
  - Male and female toilet, hand basins and hand drying facilities
  - Creative and other activities
  - Large and small group activities
  - Display of children's activities and work
  - Quiet space for children to retreat to, or do homework or lie down if unwell
- The indoor area is to be set up to allow children to participate in a variety of activities with easy access to equipment
- Easy access to areas should be maintained by making clear easily definable passageways and walkways through the building
- Educators will ensure that children properly store their bags and that bags and other items are not thrown into walkways or play areas
- Areas must be set up to ensure that proper supervision can be maintained at all times
- Access to the outdoor environment should be clear and easily accessible by the children and staff

**In relation to the Outdoor Environment:**

- The outdoor environment provides each child with at least 7 square metres of unencumbered outdoor space in compliance with National Regulation 108
- The outdoor environment will be smoke free and where possible, no smoking notices will be prominently displayed
- The outdoor space will be inspected daily for any obstacles or dangerous items and the hazard check will be recorded
- Any hazardous items will be disposed of in a safe and careful manner prior to the children playing in the area
- The outdoor space will be set up in a variety of ways to encourage participation
- Areas will be made available where children can play in large or small groups or by themselves
- Supervision should be properly maintained. Children are only to play in areas that are clearly visible to Educators, and where child/Educator ratios are maintained
- Clear boundaries shall be set and enforced
- When it is necessary to go outside the boundaries or line of supervision, an Educator must accompany children
- Adequate shade via trees and coverings will be maintained
- As far as possible, activities will be set up in shaded areas
- Use of other outdoor venues will be considered where access to the area is safe, adequate supervision can be maintained, the area is considered of value to the children's physical development and personal comfort, and where adequate staff/educator ratios can be maintained

**Continual Monitoring and Improvement:**

Continual improvement and monitoring will occur in the following ways:

- Incidental and planned consultation with families
- Co-ordination Unit Staff accessing current relevant information
- Co-ordination Unit Staff and Educators accessing current and relevant training
- Internal evaluation of incidences and the improvement of systems

**Policy Review**

<b>Date Revised</b>	<b>Comments</b>
November 2016	Scheduled Policy Review – No changes made
May 2018	Scheduled Policy Review – No changes made
January 2021	Scheduled Policy Review – No changes made