

Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy

Policy Statement

At Playtime Childcare, children's safety and wellbeing is essential to fostering a child safe environment where every child feels valued, protected and empowered. This policy aims to create a culture of respect, accountability, and awareness regarding child protection laws, regulations and standards as a Child Safe Organisation.

Background

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for providing a child safe environment to minimise risk of harm and hazard to children attending education and care services.

Scope

This policy applies to all children, educators, staff, families, management, students, volunteers, and visitors at our service.

Paramount Consideration

At Playtime Childcare, the safety, rights, and best interests of every child are the highest priority and underpin all aspects of our operations and decision-making. This commitment applies to all individuals involved in the delivery of our service, including the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisors, service leaders, educators, and support staff, in alignment with NSW legislative requirements.

Playtime Childcare acknowledges that the rights and best interests of the child must take precedence over all other considerations. This includes financial interests, operational pressures, and any other obligations, including those arising under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth). All persons with management or control of the service are required to ensure that this principle is upheld in every decision.

Playtime Procedure Reference

Providing a Child Safe Environment Procedure

Policy & Procedure Access and Supporting Documents

- All Playtime Childcare policies and procedures are located:
 - Electronically on OWNA for Staff via à Staff à Policies and Procedures
 - Electronically on OWNA for Families via à Configure à Policies and Resources
 - Management has access electronically via computer documents
 - Hard copies available upon request
- Regulative required policies and procedures will be reviewed annually, all other policies biannually
- Relevant checklists, risk assessments and documents are located via the OWNA platform:

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- Commitment to child safety statement
- All Risk Assessment
- Centre Safety checks
- Excursion Safety Checks
- WWCC Verifications
- Incident and Injury Forms
- Incident and Allegation Records
- Safe sleep checks
- Code of conduct record
- Register of Child Protection Concerns
- Incident Response Template includes Risk Assessment form
- Playtime Childsafe MRG Poster

Related Sources for further Information

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
- Child Safe Standards NSW
- ChildStory Reporter
- Department of Education – Child Safety Reforms
- Department of Education – Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Framework
- Guide to the National Quality Standard
- Heads of Entities and Reportable Conduct Responsibilities – Office of the Children's Guardian
- Identifying Reportable Allegations – Office of the Children's Guardian
- Keeping our kids safe: Cultural safety and the national principles for child safe organisations
- National Child Safe Foundation Training Modules (Gekko)
- National Quality Standard
- NSW Government – Communities and Justice
- NSW Government – Working with Children Check
- NSW Government Legislation – Children's Guardian Act 2019
- NSW Government Legislation – Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998
- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian – Child Safe Standards and Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse – Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect (Australian Institute of Family Studies)

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- Start Strong for Long Day Care Program Guidelines
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017

Legislative Requirements

Education and Care National Regulations (2011 - 653)/ National Law Act (2010)

Law/ Reg	Law/ Regulation	Our Response to:
Section 162A (Law)	Child protection training	All staff and volunteers must complete child protection training, which will be reviewed and updated regularly. Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 No 104
Section 165 (Law)	Offence to inadequately supervise children	It is an offence to inadequately supervise children. We maintain appropriate educator-to-child ratios to ensure safe and adequate supervision at all times Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 No 104
Section 166 (Law)	Offence to use inappropriate discipline	The use of inappropriate discipline, including corporal punishment or emotional abuse, is strictly prohibited. Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 No 104
Section 167 (Law)	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards	All staff are responsible for identifying and removing potential hazards, ensuring the safety of children from any form of harm. Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 No 104
Reg 82	Tobacco, drug, and alcohol-free environment	Our services operate within a smoke-free, drug-free, and alcohol-free environment to ensure the health and safety of children. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)

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Law/ Reg	Law/ Regulation	Our Response to:
Reg 83	Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs	Staff members and family day care educators must not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while providing education and care to children. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
Reg 84	Awareness of child protection law	Staff and educators are made aware of child protection laws and their responsibilities in maintaining a safe environment for children. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
Reg 103	Premises, furniture, and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair	All premises, furniture, and equipment will be regularly checked and maintained to ensure they are safe and child friendly. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
Reg 115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision	The layout of the premises will be designed to facilitate effective supervision of children at all times. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
Reg 122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios	Only staff members actively working with children will be counted in educator-to-child ratios. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
Reg 123	Educator to child ratios – centre-based services	The staff-to-child ratio will always comply with the regulations set out for our specific type of service.

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Law/ Reg	Law/ Regulation	Our Response to:
		Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
Reg 145	Staff record	Accurate records of staff qualifications, training, and suitability will be maintained. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
154A (reg)	National Workforce Register	Playtime Childcare complies with requirements relating to the National Early Childhood Workforce Register and ensures relevant workforce information is maintained and updated as required. Education and Care Services National Regulations (NSW) (2025 SI 601a) - NSW Legislation
154B(reg)	Approved Provider must give information to the National Authority for the National Early Childhood Workforce Register	The Approved Provider ensures required workforce information is provided to the National Authority in accordance with legislative obligations. Education and Care Services National Regulations (NSW) (2025 SI 601a) - NSW Legislation
Reg 165	Record of visitors	A record of visitors to the service will be kept for safety and security purposes. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
Reg 166	Children not to be alone with visitors	Children will never be left alone with visitors unless accompanied by a staff member at all times. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)

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Law/ Reg	Law/ Regulation	Our Response to:
Reg 168	Education and care services must have policies and procedure	The service will maintain comprehensive child protection policies and procedures that align with all legal and regulatory requirements. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
Reg 170	Policies and procedures to be followed	All staff, volunteers, and educators are required to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in this document. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
Reg 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available	Policies and procedures will be kept readily accessible to staff, children, and families for review. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
Reg 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures	Any changes to policies or procedures will be promptly communicated to all staff, educators, and families. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)

Child Safe Standards

1	Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2	Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3	Families and communities are informed and involved.
4	Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are taken in to account.
5	People working with children are suitable and supported.

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6	Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused.
7	Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.
8	Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur.
9	Implantation of the Child Safe Standards is Constantly Reviewed and Improved
10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

National Quality Framework

Quality Area	Standard/Element	Our Response to:
QA 2.2	Standard –Safety	Maintaining a child safe culture promotes children's safety, dignity and rights and takes steps to prevent child maltreatment, abuse and neglect.
QA 2.2.1	Element - Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
QA 2.2.3	Element -Child Safety and Protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect

Guiding Principles

All decision-making within Playtime Childcare is guided by the following principles to ensure the creation and maintenance of a child-safe environment:

- **Paramount Considerations:** The safety, well-being, and protection of children are the highest priority. All decisions and actions prioritise the child's rights, needs, and best interests.
- **Safe Environment for All Children:** Every child attending our service will be provided with a safe environment, both physically and online, supported by a culture of child safety.

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- **Wellbeing and Empowerment of Children:** The wellbeing of children is our top priority. Children will actively participate in decisions affecting them, fostering an environment where they are encouraged to reach their full potential.
- **Responsibility and Accountability:** All management, educators, and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in identifying and responding to children at risk of abuse or neglect.
- **Child Protection Training:** Relevant staff will complete child protection training as required by National Law and regulations, ensuring they are equipped to protect children from harm.
- **Awareness of Legal Obligations:** Nominated supervisors, educators, staff, volunteers, and students working with children are fully informed about current child protection laws (including child safe standards) and their obligations under the education and care national regulations and law.
- **Adequate Supervision:** At all times, we will ensure reasonable precautions and adequate supervision to protect children from harm and hazards.
- **Incident and Emergency Management:** Procedures for managing incidents and emergencies are in place, regularly rehearsed, and communicated to all relevant parties.
- **Effective Supervision of Indoor and Outdoor Environments:** When our program involves both indoor and outdoor environments, educators will ensure effective supervision of children in both settings to guarantee their safety.

Related Policies

- Child Protection Reporting Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Workplace Health and Safety Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Staffing Arrangements Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Responsible Person Policy
- Guiding Children's Behaviours Policy
- Educational Framework and Practice Policy
- Governance and Management Policy
- Grievance and Complaints Policy
- Interactions with Children, families and staff Policy
- Protected Disclosure Policy (whistleblower protections)
- Recruitment, Induction, Orientation and Probation Policy
- Safe use of Technology and Online Environment Policy

Policy/ Procedure Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by: Approved provider or delegate, director, employees, children and families.

Induction and Ongoing Training

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All educators, staff, volunteers and students will participate in induction and ongoing training to support the implementation of this policy and promote a child-safe culture. Induction will include child protection legislation, mandatory reporting obligations, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, the service's Code of Conduct, and completion of the Gekko Foundation Child Safe Organisations training within 14 days of employment.

Ongoing professional learning will ensure educators and staff remain informed of legislative updates, best practice, and their responsibilities in providing a child-safe environment. All educators and staff will complete the Gekko Foundation Child Safe Organisations training at least every two years. Records of all training completed will be maintained by the service.

Key Terms

Term	Meaning	Source
ACECQA – Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.	acecqa.gov.au
Child and Young Person	A child is defined, in the Children and Young Persons as a person who is under the age of 16 years. A young person is defined, as a person aged 16 or 17. Note however that for some of the child abuse offences particularly those relating to sexual offences, a child is defined as a person under the age of 16. For the purposes of the Failure to Protect and Reporting to Police (Failure to Report)	Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW) Crimes Act 1900 (NSW) Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)

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	offences, defines a child as a person under the age of 18.	
Child-related Work	Child-related work refers to work that involves direct or indirect contact with children or providing services for their welfare, protection, education, or care	Australian Government (Fair Work Ombudsman):
Child Safety Incidents or Concerns	A child safety concern refers to any situation where a child is at risk of harm or neglect, or where there are signs that a child may be in an unsafe environment.	Australian Department of Education
Child Safe Organisation	Child safe organisations create cultures, adopt strategies and act to prevent harm to children, including sexual abuse. The Australian and New Zealand Children's Commissioners and Guardians (ANZCCG) defines a child safe organisation as one that systematically: • creates conditions to reduce the likelihood of children being harmed • creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying and reporting harm • responds appropriately to disclosures, allegations and suspicions of harm.	Guide to the Child Safe Standards
Child Safe Scheme	Child-related organisations including those in the Education, Early Childhood, Health, Community Service and Youth Justice sectors, must implement the Child Safe	Office of the Children's Guardian

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	Standards, along with local councils, religious organisations providing services to children and sport and recreation organisations providing services to children. The scheme extends the powers of the Office of the Children's Guardian to monitor, investigate and enforce implementation of the Child Safe Standards to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.	
Contractors	A contractor is a person or company hired to perform specific work or provide services for a set period of time, often under a contract. They are usually not permanent employees but work on a project basis, such as construction, repairs, or other specialized tasks.	Dictionaries
Mandatory reporting	The legislative requirement for selected classes of people to report suspected child abuse and neglect to government authorities.	Department of Communities and Justice
Organisational Culture	Refers to the organisation's values as demonstrated on a day-to-day basis by its leaders and staff, a	Guide to the Child Safe Standards
Rights of the child	Human rights belonging to all children, as specified in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	Guide to the NQF
Volunteer	A person who works for an organisation without being paid	Merriam-Webster Dictionary

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Wellbeing	Sound wellbeing results from the satisfaction of basic needs – the need for tenderness and affection; security and clarity; social recognition; to feel competent; physical needs and for meaning in life. It includes happiness and satisfaction, effective social functioning and the dispositions of optimism, openness, curiosity, and resilience.	Guide to the NQF
Working with children / Working with vulnerable people check (WWCC/WWVP)	A notice, certificate or other document granted to, or with respect to, a person under a working with children law to the effect that: • the person has been assessed as suitable to work with children; or • there has been no information that if the person worked with children the person would pose a risk to the children; or • the person is not prohibited from attempting to obtain, undertake or remain in child-related employment.	National Law
Working directly with children	A person is working directly with children at a given time if at that time the person: • is physically present with the children, and • is directly engaged in providing education and care to the children.	National Regulations

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