

### STATEMENT

Kogarah Community Services (KCS) provides an environment that ensures the safety, health and wellbeing of children at all times. The welfare and protection of all children is of paramount importance. Educators will ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times and that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury or trauma.

### PURPOSE

We aim to minimise the risk of harm, ensuring the environment is safe to children under the care of the Service.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, educators, management, and visitors of the Service.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### SUPERVISION

- The following child: educator ratios are the minimal requirement for our Service's various types of activities:
  - 15 children to 1 educator for service-based activities.
  - 15 children to 1 educator for regularly scheduled local excursions.
  - 10 children to 1 educator for excursions.
  - 5-8 children to 1 educator for swimming at a supervised facility
  - 5 children to 1 educator for swimming in an unsupervised facility
- Consideration will be given to the risks posed by the activity, age and developmental stage of children when determining the supervision requirements of all children.
- For more details about excursions of higher risks which require a more detailed and thorough risk assessment, please refer to the Excursion Policy and Water Safety Policy for more details.

#### ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Educators must ensure adequate supervision of children at all times.
- When supervising children, educators position themselves to allow their active supervision to all children in their designated supervision area at all times. If an educator needs to be temporarily relieved of supervision duties for any reason (e.g. toilet break), they must inform other supervising educators about their whereabouts and when they will be back, before leaving the area. Another educator must temporarily take over their supervision duties during this period.
- ONLY educators are responsible for the supervision of children enrolled at the Service. Volunteers, students and other KCS staff can supplement supervision at the Service and on excursions however they are not included in the child: educator ratio.
- Once children have been signed out of care, the Parent/Guardian/Authorised person is responsible for supervising children whilst they remain at the Service, and for supervising siblings or any other children not enrolled at the Service who may be accompanying them.

#### MANAGING THE FACILITY

##### SECURITY

- Only approved educators and others with delegated authority will be given a key to access the building and equipment areas.
- Extra keys to the school will only be cut after agreement by the school.
- All monies and staff records will be kept in a lockable cabinet in a secure place.
- Educators will ensure that the places use for education and care of children at the Service are left in a secure manner before leaving, all lighting is off and all doors are properly locked before departure.
- Educators will inform the Police, school and the management team as soon as possible if there has been any kind of break-in at the Service.

### **BUILDINGS, EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE**

- Equipment will be chosen to meet children's developmental needs and interests. KCS will provide suitable furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment for the education and care of children.
- Service premises, all equipment and furniture will be maintained in a safe and clean condition at all times.
- Children will use the onsite toilet, washing and drying facilities of the school where the Service operates. This ensure that they are adequate, developmentally and age-appropriate. Any risks and hazards of these facilities will be reported to the school as soon as practicable.
- All plug sockets shall be maintained as child safe.
- Electrical appliances shall be in good working order.
- Regular maintenance and immediate repair will be conducted to ensure up-to-date standards.
- All contractors will have their own public liability insurance and must provide a copy of their certificate of currency to KCS Admin Office prior to commencing any work.
- Recycled craft materials should be checked for potential hazards prior to use.
- Educators should ensure safe handling of all tools used as part of any activity.
- Families will be encouraged to notify educators of any safety issues they observe whilst at the Service.
- All educators have a duty of care to report any maintenance requirements to the Responsible Person as soon as possible.
- Faulty equipment should be removed or protection placed around any dangerous building sites.
- For major repairs, a minimum of three quotes will be sought and reviewed by Management who will make a decision on a further course of action. The Nominated Supervisor or someone with management control may obtain the quotes.
- It is the responsibility of KCS Management (in collaboration with the school), once a major hazard has been raised, to ensure that it is rectified in the most efficient manner possible and that the Service is safe for everyone.

### **STORAGE**

- Storage areas will be cleaned and tidied at least twice a year or as necessary.
- Play equipment and toys will be brought out from the storage areas for children's easy access during the operating hours of the Service.
- Children will be encouraged to respect KCS equipment and be directed to pack away equipment that they have used in order to avoid trip hazards.
- All equipment is to be neatly packed away at the end of each session.
- Separate storage units will be available for storage of sporting and large outdoor equipment to prevent clutter.
- All personal records (including medication records and staff records) are kept in a nominated secure place ensuring that they are kept confidential and restrictive to access by designated staff members.

### **HANDLING AND STORAGE OF CLEANING AGENTS AND/OR CHEMICALS**

- Educators must ensure that all toxic chemicals are stored in a locked cupboard.
- Chemicals should be stored in their original container. If stored in another container, they must be labelled clearly to indicate what it is.
- Chemicals should never be stored in food or drink containers.
- Any recommended personal protective equipment such as gloves, aprons, goggles, masks, etc. must be used when handling chemicals.
- Educators are to ensure that store room/room/cabinet doors remain closed and craft materials, tools, first aid equipment and medications are not inadvertently accessible to any child.

### **VENTILATION, TEMPERATURE AND NATURAL LIGHTING**

- All heating and cooling systems will be of good quality and checked regularly to ensure safety and reliability.
- Adequate ventilation will be provided at all times.
- Where activities involve toxic materials such as paints, educators are to ensure there is adequate ventilation available before undertaking the activity.

- Natural light is considered to be most desirable. Provision of natural light areas will be enhanced as much as possible.
- In areas where natural light is not available/or adequate, artificial light will be provided.

#### **PEST CONTROL**

- Equipment and food items will be properly stored so as not to attract pests and vermin.
- Recycle bins will be cleared when needed. Garbage bins will be cleaned weekly by the school.
- Kitchen, food preparation areas and storage areas will be cleaned and maintained after each session of the Service.
- Should any pests or vermin be identified then action should be taken:
  - Initially using non-chemical methods such as physical removal, maintaining a clean environment, and use of any non-chemical products.
  - 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 KCS Management where the above methods have failed.
- Any use of chemical products should be conducted outside the hours of the children and educators' presence in the building if possible.

#### **MANAGING THE INDOOR AND OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT: INDOOR ENVIRONMENT**

- Risk assessments are completed for all indoor areas ordinarily used by the Service and updated as needed.
- The indoor space will be inspected daily for any obstacles or dangerous items and the hazard identification check will be completed.
- KCS will only enrol the number of children in the Service, which can comfortably fit into the building space and complies with the National Regulations.
- Where children are indoors for long periods due to weather conditions, other areas will be sought to disperse the group such as the library, the COLA or any other space agreed with the school.
- Designated areas in the indoor environment will be provided for including:
  - Signing children in/out of the Service and maintaining daily records;
  - Educators and families to talk in private;
  - Space for children to store their bags and belongings;
  - Storage for equipment, food, dangerous materials, and family records;
  - Preparation of food and drinks;
  - Kitchen wastes and other garbage;
  - Equipment cleaning;
  - Male and female children toilets, hand basins and hand drying facilities (managed by the school);
  - Creative and other activities;
  - Large and small group activities;
  - Display of children's activities and work;
  - Quiet space for children to rest or sleep.
- The indoor area is to be set up to allow children to participate in a variety of activities with easy access to equipment and craft materials.
- Anything that is causing an obstruction within the indoor environment should be removed and placed in the correct storage 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 educators.

#### **OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT**

- Risk assessments are completed for all outdoor areas ordinarily used by the Service. Risk assessments are updated as needed.

- 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.
- The outdoor space will be inspected daily for any obstacles or dangerous items and the hazard identification check will be completed.
- Any hazardous items will be removed 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 children's participation.
- Areas will be made available where children can play in large or small groups or by themselves.
- Supervision should be properly maintained and children are only permitted to play in areas that are clearly visible to educators, and where child/educator ratios are maintained.
- Clear safety rules (e.g. not using sticks) and boundaries (e.g. defining out-of-bound areas) shall be set and enforced at all times.
- When it is necessary to go outside the boundaries or line of supervision, children must be accompanied by an educator or ask for an educator's permission (e.g. to get a ball) but the child will be supervised in doing so.
- Adequate shade via trees and coverings will be maintained in consultation with the school.
- Use of other outdoor venues will be considered if access to the area is safe, adequate supervision and staff/educator ratios can be maintained, and the area is considered as valuable to the children's physical development.
- In the event that sharps are found on the Service premises, they must be safely removed immediately. Educators are required to use gloves and tongs to remove sharps prior to disposing of them.

### **ONLINE SAFETY**

Our Service is committed to create and maintain a safe online environment with support and collaboration with staff, families and community. Management ensures anti-virus and internet security systems are installed to block access to unsuitable web sites.

Our Service ensures backups of important and confidential data is made regularly and either stored securely offline, or online. Software and devices are updated regularly to avoid any breach of confidential information.

Families are provided with information about our software program which is password protected and used to share observations, photos, videos, daily reports and portfolios. Passwords are not to be shared with others as per our written agreement.

### **CHILD SAFE PRACTICES**

#### **NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS**

Our Service is committed to being a child safe organisation and endorses the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, placing the protection of children as a priority of our responsibilities and obligations. The Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission provide guidance for our Service to ensure our policies and procedures, strategies and attitudes, ensure children's safety is paramount.

Our Service has a zero tolerance to child abuse, and we are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. We promote diversity and tolerance and aim to form equitable and positive relationships with children. We ensure children participate in decisions affecting them and listen and respect their suggestions and ideas. We respond to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.

We are dedicated in promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

### **RECRUITMENT AND ORIENTATION OF STAFF**

- All staff employed to work in roles related to the Service, including full time/ part time and casual educators, volunteers and students will be required to have the following probity checks:
  - Working with Children Check verified by the NSW Office of the Children's;

- At least two reference checks;
- Completion of a Prohibition Notice Declaration and a Declaration of Personal Situation for determining their suitability to work with KCS;
- National Police Check and accredited child protection training are required for a Responsible Person before commencement of the role (refer to Responsible Person Policy).
- During induction, all staff employed to work in roles related to the Service will be inducted into expectations of their role with regard to providing a child safe environment. These include their Position Description, Child Safe Code of Conduct, Child Protection Policy and Child Protection Procedure.
- All staff will be informed of their responsibilities as a Mandatory Reporter as part of their orientation and induction process. This will involve discussion regarding their current understanding, use of Child Protection Policy and resources. Information related to sexual grooming will also be provided upon orientation and induction to ensure that all new staff members are aware of the signs and boundaries related to appropriately interacting with children.

**COMPLIANCE**

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)		
QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
<b>2.2</b>	Safety	Each child is protected.
<b>2.2.1</b>	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazards.
<b>2.2.2</b>	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.
<b>2.2.3</b>	Child 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.
QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
<b>5.1.1</b>	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
<b>7.1.2</b>	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS and NATIONAL LAW	
<b>82</b>	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
<b>84</b>	Awareness of child protection law
<b>102 (A-D)</b>	Transportation of children (risk assessments and authorisations)
<b>103</b>	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
<b>104</b>	Fencing
<b>105</b>	Furniture, materials and equipment
<b>106</b>	Laundry and hygiene facilities
<b>109</b>	Toilet and hygiene facilities
<b>115</b>	Facilities designed to facilitate supervision

123	Educator to child ratios- centre based services
136	First aid qualifications
155	Interactions with children
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168 (h)	Providing a child safe environment
S162 (A)	Persons in day to day charge and nominated supervisors to have child protection training
S165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

### SOURCE

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Australian Government. Department of Skills, Education and Employment. *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.* (2009).
- Australian Human Rights Commission (2020). *Child Safe Organisations.*  
<https://childsafes.humanrights.gov.au/>
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012  
Children's Health and Safety – An analysis of Quality Area 2 of the National Quality Standard
- Department of Education NSW Providing a child safe environment
- Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011).
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).
- Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2020).  
NSW Government Office of the Children's Guardian *A guide to the Child Safe Standards.* (2020).
- Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).
- [United Nations Convention of Rights of the Child. \(1989\). \(UNCRC\)](#)  
Victoria State Government Health and Human Services. Creating child safe organisations:  
<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/creating-child-safe-organisations>
- Work Health and Safety Act, (2011).

### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Arrival and Departure Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Physical Environment Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Staffing Arrangements Policy
- Sun Safe Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Water Safety Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy

**VERSION CONTROL & REVIEW**

<b>File Reference</b>	CSP043 - Providing A Child Safe Environment Policy				
<b>Date Created</b>	15/10/2021	<b>Created By</b>	Jordan Ross	<b>Responsible</b>	Children's Services Manager

Version Number	Modified or Reviewed by	Modifications Made/Notes	Date	STATUS (Internal, External, Archived)
V1	OM	Compliance with NQF & Rebrand	January 2016	External
V2	TT	Update due to changes to government department names and Acts	July 2017	External
V3	TT	Incorporated Childcare Desktop format and update due to Regulations changes	December 2020	External
V4	MT	Content review	January 2021	External
V5	JR	New format	October 2021	External
V5	MT	Content review, formatting and approval	25/11/2021	External