

Policy Statement

Activity Centres Incorporated believes that the supervision of children in our care is of paramount importance and that we all have a responsibility to protect the health and safety of each child at all times. Children need safe and secure environments in which to thrive. Effective supervision is integral to creating environments that are safe and responsive to the needs of all children. Part of this is ensuring that children are protected from hazards or harm that may arise from their play and daily routines. Effective supervision also allows Educators to engage in meaningful interactions with children while ensuring their safety and wellbeing.

ACI believes that children of different ages and stages will require different types of supervision. ACI aims to ensure that our older and more responsible children are provided opportunities to develop their independence.

Considerations

- ✓ Education and Care Services National Regulations 2018
- ✓ Education and Care Services National Quality Standards 2018
- ✓ Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010- Section 165 (2) "Adequate Supervision"
- ✓ My Time Our Place
- ✓ Activity Centres Inc. Policies and procedures

Definitions

- ☐ **Adequate Supervision:** entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the Service, being in sight and/or hearing of an Educator at all times including toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used. Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of each child at the Service. Adequate supervision requires that Educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs and immediately intervene if necessary.

Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- number, age and abilities of children
 - number and positioning of Educators
 - current activity of each child
 - areas in which the children are engaged in an activity – visibility and accessibility
 - developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
 - experience, knowledge and skill of each Educator
 - need for Educators to move between areas – effective communication strategies
- ☐ **Duty of Care:** a common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of an Organisation to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.
- ☐ **Hazard:** a source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.

Procedures

- ☐ Educator to child ratio will be 1:15 as per Regulation 123.
- ☐ Only Educators who are working directly with children at the Service will be included in the Educator:Child ratio (Regulation 122).
- ☐ At ACI we promote active supervision. Active supervision is a combination of listening to and watching children play, being aware of the environment and its potential risks, the weather conditions, the time of day, managing small and large groups of children, and an understanding of child development about how children play with their peers.
- ☐ An understanding that the older and more responsible children's right to greater independence to allow them to cooperate, problem solve, explore and develop a sense of agency with their peers.
- ☐ Wherever possible activities will be set up to ensure Educators can supervise in a manner that enables them to see more than one activity.
- ☐ Low risk activities would enable Educators to care for a larger group of children in one area, ie movies.

- ☐ Educators will constantly discuss and move to where higher risk activities are taking place. This could mean one Educator to 20 children for a low risk craft activity and a 1:10 ratio for tree climbing or fire play, however the overall ratio remains at 1:15 across the Service.
- ☐ Physical environment will be set up to facilitate ease of supervision for Educators through- layout, type of activities offered, positioning of activities and areas in use.
- ☐ On the job and formal training will be provided to Educators on active supervision, with ongoing discussions at meetings.
- ☐ Active supervision discussion is part of ACI's Staff Orientation process.
- ☐ Except for necessary discussions regarding children or matters relating to the Service, Educators will not congregate together for extended periods of time while supervising children (walkie talkies to be used as much as possible).
- ☐ The Education and Care Unit will be notified within 24 hours (in line with ACI Reporting to the Regulatory Authority Policy) when/if a child-
 - Appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for
 - Appears to have been taken or removed from the Service premises in a way that breaks the National Regulations
 - Is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the Education and Care premises

To Ensure active Supervision, Educators need to:

- ☐ Develop and display awareness of children- including knowing children's skill level, interests etc. Knowledge of children helps Educators monitor and enhance skills that promote children's positive behaviour.
- ☐ Implement positioning- a skill that requires being able to see all of the children in your area of supervision. Educators position themselves to be aware of the entire environment and to see as many children as possible. All children are monitored by sight or sound at all times.
- ☐ Position themselves near known hazards and exit points to prevent children leaving the Service unaccompanied or from accessing unsupervised/unsafe areas of the Service.
- ☐ Scanning- regularly glancing around the environment to see what is happening.
- ☐ Redirection- of children when required.
- ☐ Have quality interactions- meaningful interactions with children to promote learning during play and routine times.
- ☐ Communicate with other Educators about their location within the environment (by using walkie talkies when necessary) and identify other Educators when moving from one area to another.
- ☐ Be alert to, and aware of risks and hazards.
- ☐ Be familiar with ACI's PAT system of supervision. Positioning Awareness Teamwork (Information sheets available at Services) and Staff Orientation Handbook.

Students and Volunteers

- ☐ At no time will students or volunteers be included in the ratio of Educators supervising children.
- ☐ Students and volunteers will not be left alone with a child or a group of children.
- ☐ No Educator under the age of 18 will be left alone with a group of children.

Team Approach

- ☐ Each Educator comes to the Organisation with their own beliefs and values. With this also comes their understanding and interpretation of how and why certain things are done. It is important to ensure that the Service has a team approach when it comes to the way supervision is performed and why it is so critical to their work.
- ☐ The Service will regularly discuss supervision practices at meetings and explore each Educator's definition of what supervision means to them and what that looks like in action. For all children to be safely supervised there must be an agreement on how supervision is undertaken.
- ☐ Walkie talkies will be used for direct and instant communication between Educators in a group or one on one.

Rosters

- ☐ To ensure our Organisation meets ratios, the Manager will ensure a roster is completed and made available weekly. When creating a roster, the Manager will base the ratio on the number of children enrolled.
- ☐ Ensuring a minimum of two Educators are rostered on duty at all times children are in attendance at each Service

Minimising Risk

Risk Assessments:

- ☐ Each supervision area comes with its own unique risks and hazards. To minimise the possibility of children, Educators or visitors being harmed anywhere in the Service it may be necessary for certain areas to have risk assessments completed and documented. This will assist Educators in being able to focus on supervising and interacting with children rather than dealing with hazard reduction during key supervision times.
- ☐ The Service will ensure that any area deemed 'high risk', based on the volume of children accessing it, the activities that happen in that area or the number of 'near misses' that have occurred there, will have a designated risk assessment and accompanying management plan or strategy. This may be included as part of the Service's daily indoor/outdoor safety check.
- ☐ Educators will ensure that children understand not to access unsupervised areas of the Service and that potentially hazardous items are kept out of areas that children have access to in accordance with safety procedures.
- ☐ Written risk assessments may be required for high risk activities.

CIA- Children In After School Care

- ☐ A privilege for children in Years 5 and Year 6 who agree to abide by rules and conditions of being in this group and who demonstrate maturity, the ability to follow Service rules and follow direction from Educators.
- ☐ Parents and children will be required to sign permission forms annually.
- ☐ Opportunities for older children will be provided so they may develop independence through greater freedom and choice of play areas. These opportunities may not be in immediate supervision of an Educator.
- ☐ Red CIA hats will be supplied to each child and must be worn so Educators can identify children in this group.
- ☐ Children not following outlined guidelines will not be permitted to continue in the CIA for a period of time. Children will be permitted to rejoin the CIA group at the discretion of Coordinators and Staff.

Supervision Outside of the Service

Transporting and walking children to and from the Service:

- ☐ There are obvious hazards that can be identified when children are outside of the Service environment. Such times may include excursions, when children are walking to and from Schools and when moving between the Service and extra-curricular activities. Educators will discuss and document the potential hazards and risks associated with the transportation of children whether it is via walking, buses or other modes. A documented risk assessment will be available if the activities of children during these transitions are deemed high risk.
- ☐ Educators are aware of Risk Assessments and made aware of their responsibilities.
- ☐ Educators will ensure that children are supervised at all times, whilst under our care and outside of the Service grounds, any activities and play children undertake during these times is appropriate to the environment they are in and free from potential hazards.
- ☐ Staff will ensure they are familiar with the procedures for locating a missing child who has not arrived at their expected collection point.

Excursions

- ☐ Supervision levels will be reviewed prior to an excursion occurring, based on the required Risk Assessment.
- ☐ Educators are to ensure children are never left unattended in a vehicle that the Service uses to transport children from one location to another.
- ☐ Educators will ensure a check of public bathroom facilities for hazards or risks is completed before children use facilities. Children will be accompanied and supervised when using public bathroom facilities.
- ☐ Head counts and roll calls will be completed regularly.
- ☐ Children will not be left alone with venue Staff or members of the general public.

Checklist for Staff

- ☒ Ensure a minimum of two Educators are rostered on duty at all times.
- ☒ Ensure you know where all children are in your area.
- ☒ Supervision is one of the most important skills required by Educators to develop and master.
- ☒ Ensure Educators know their responsibility when supervising.

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- ☒ Educators familiar with ACI's PAT system of supervision- Positioning Awareness Teamwork
- ☒ Ensure walkie talkies are used for direct and instant communication between Educators.
- ☒ Ensure younger children and children with additional needs are accounted for.
- ☒ Allow older more responsible children an area where they play without adult interference; however be able to be checked on throughout the session.

_____ end of policy _____

Policy is only endorsed if initialled by 2 members of the management committee

Endorsed by the Management Committee on the 27th March 2019

Supervision Policy is to be reviewed by the 27th March 2022