

Title	ELC and SAC Supervision Policy
Description of policy	This policy sets out the obligations of Early Learning Centres and School Age Care operating under the Education and Care Services National Law Act (the National Law) in respect to supervision and protecting children from harm or hazard.
Required because	ELCs&SACs have a legal duty of care to ensure children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where they are supervised at all times. This legal duty of care is stated in the National Law(s) which requires that all children being educated and cared for at an approved service are adequately supervised at all times and are protected from harm and hazard. CECG has a duty of care to ensure children are supervised at all times. This policy assists to create a safe and secure environment. It is an offence under the National Law to inadequately supervise children (s165) and to fail to protect children from harm or hazards (s167)
Description of changes	Minor format and editorial changes. Update links Included more detail in water safety Notification periods New regulations regarding online safety New regulations including personal mobile phones
Applies to	☐ Organisation-wide ☒ Specific: ELCs and SACs ☐ Staff only ☐ Students only ☒ Staff and students
Status	☐ New ☐ Major revision of existing document ☒ Minor revision of existing document

Publication location	Intranet
Related documents	ELC and SAC Staffing Policy ELC and SAC Behaviour Support and Staff Interactions Policy ELC and SAC Excursion and Events Policy Supervision Risk Assessment & Minimisation Plan
Intranet category	Early Learning Centres and School-Age Care
Review date	September 2027
Trim reference number	R581196

Approval authority for this version:	School and Family Services Leader
Approval date:	July 2024
Accountable authority	General Manager, Early Learning Centres
Responsible officer	Senior Manager early learning quality and compliance

1. Summary	3
2. Supervision Policy.....	3
3. National Quality Standard.....	3
4. Supervision Practices	3
5. Supervision in SACS.....	4
6. Risk Assessment and Planning	4
7. Water safety.....	5
Environmental Hazards.....	5
8. Notification Requirements regarding drowning	6
9. Safe use of digital technologies and online environments	7
10. Definitions	7
11. Related Documents and Legislation.....	7
12. Contact	7

1. Summary

- 1.1 This policy sets out the obligations of Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (CECG) Early Learning Centres (ELC) and School Age Care (SAC) services have to supervise children in their care. The policy also sets out the CECG expectations of its ELC's and SAC's services in respect to responsibility and management of supervision requirements.

2. Supervision Policy

- 2.1 The [Education and Care Services National Law](#) Act (National Law (s)) requires that all children being educated and cared for at an approved service are adequately supervised at all times and are protected from harm and hazard. It is an offence to inadequately supervise children (s165) and to fail to protect children from harm or hazards (s167). The National Quality Standard (NQS) applied by the National Law requires standards in relation to supervision be met.
- 2.2 It is also a requirement of CECG that all children in the care of an ELC and SAC are at all times appropriately supervised.

3. National Quality Standard

- 3.1 The importance of actively supervising children to promote children's health, safety and learning is reflected in Quality Area 2 of the NQS, in particular:
- Standard 2.2: Each child is protected.
 - Element 2.2.1: At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
 - Standard 4.1: Staffing arrangements
 - Element 4.1.1: Organisation of educators
 - Element 4.2.2: Professional standards

4. Supervision Practices

- 4.1 Educator-to-child ratios alone do not achieve adequate supervision. The risk assessment processes outlined at 6 may result in decisions being made by the nominated supervisor or person in day to day charge that it is necessary to exceed the educator to child ratio in order to maintain adequate levels of supervision. If additional educators cannot be deployed in such circumstances other risk mitigation strategies should be considered.
- 4.2 Supervision is critical to the safety of children and helps to protect children from harm or hazards. Adequate supervision means:
- that an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation.
 - knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently. Educators should balance supervision and engagement by drawing on a range of skills such as positioning, using peripheral vision and monitoring changes in noise and stress levels.
- 4.3 Educators are to be alert and aware of risks and hazards and the potential for accidents and injury, not only in their immediate location but also throughout the service. To provide

effective supervision, educators need to be conscious of the physical environment and be attuned to the needs of individual children.

- 4.4 Educators need to communicate and collaborate with one another to ensure children are supervised effectively. This is necessary to ensure educators know where their colleagues are in the service and how this may affect the supervision of children. Additionally, it enables roles and responsibilities to be clearly understood. For example, educators should let their colleagues know if they are leaving an area for any reason, such as to get a resource from another room, or to go to the bathroom.
- 4.5 To effectively supervise groups of children, educators need to conduct risk assessments and make professional judgements to determine an approach to supervision. Educators should consider the environment, the children, and the context of the activities children participate in.
- 4.6 Nominated Supervisors must ensure they roster a minimum of 2 educators to open the service and a minimum of 2 educators to close the service.

5. Supervision in SACS

- 5.1 Children of different ages and abilities will need different levels of supervision. Young children will require close supervision, where for older children it is important to balance the need for close supervision with respect for their age and developing independence. SACS may also need to consider the following:
 - organisation of the environment to balance supervision and children's growing need for privacy and autonomy
 - the location of children's toilets and how children will be supervised when visiting and returning from the toilets
 - supervision during the transition between school to the SACS particularly for younger children and new children who are unfamiliar with routines and procedures.

6. Risk Assessment and Planning

- 6.1 A [Supervision Risk Assessment & Minimisation Plan](#) must be conducted for the physical environment annually and reassessed in response to any changes to the physical environment for each service. Risk assessments need to consider the design of the facilities and building maintenance and seek to identify areas of improvement to ensure appropriate supervision is provided.
- 6.2 The Nominated Supervisor must develop supervision maps as part of the risk assessment, including identifying points where educators should position themselves to maximise the effectiveness and scope of supervision and provide heightened supervision in areas of greater risk.
- 6.3 Risk assessments must also identify higher risk activities such as using tools and water-based activities. These assessments should be identified as part of the educational programming and planning process. In planning experiences for children, collaboration between educators is important to ensure the numbers of high-risk experiences being offered at any given time can be effectively supervised.
- 6.4 Nominated Supervisors are responsible for collaborating with educators to ensure risk assessments are conducted and appropriate planning to ensure adequate supervision by appropriately qualified educators.

7. Water safety

Water provides a unique learning experience for children, and we value the benefits of children having access to water for their play and exploration. The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to managing water safety including any activity involving water play, excursions near water, safety around hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in Early Learning Centre and SACS environments. As one of the leading causes of death for children under the age of five, CECG recognises the necessity for stringent practices regarding water hazards. Water hazards include water play, excursions to locations which have unobstructed access to water, bathing/toileting and cleaning practices using water. Students must be actively supervised whenever they are around water hazards.

- 7.1 CECG acknowledges the sensory benefits of exposing students to water play in a safe environment and encourages ELCs and SACS to include water as an educational tool in actively supervised situations. The safety and supervision of students in and around water should always be of the highest priority.
- 7.2 ELCs and SACS are also encouraged to educate students regarding the importance of water safety, so that they can identify and minimise the risks that water pose.
- 7.3 Children must be actively supervised whenever they are around water hazards. While there are no specific requirements for additional supervision when a child is playing with, in or around water, ELCs and SACS are required to adjust their supervision requirements according to the risks and hazards associated with the activity or environment.
- 7.4 When playing with water less than 30 centimetres deep, or in unfamiliar environments which contain water hazards, staff are required to ensure that all children are being actively supervised and monitored closely by an adult at all times. Children should never be left unsupervised in rooms with a water hazard, full bucket, or access to hot water.
- 7.5 Water for pets at ELC and SACS must be changed daily and only be accessible to children when educators are present.
- 7.6 If children are engaged in aquatic activities in water deeper than 30cm, it is recommended that an adult to student ratio is maintained which allows all students involved to remain within reaching distance of an adult at all times. An employee with current recognised first aid qualifications (including CPR) must also be present and available at all times.

Environmental Hazards

Hazards at the Centre

- 7.7 As young children are capable of drowning in as little as 5cm of water, it is important that regular checks are conducted of the ELC, SACS and surrounding areas, particularly immediately following rain. These safety checks should investigate any holes, sandpits, toys or receptacles in gardens and external play areas which may collect water.
- 7.8 CECG ELC and SACS employees must ensure that troughs, trays and other objects used for water play are emptied immediately at the conclusion of water play and are stored in a manner which prevents them from filling with water in the event of rain (if vessels are unable to be moved, they should be covered).
- 7.9 Buckets used for cleaning should be emptied immediately after use and stored out of reach of children.

- 7.10 Any hot drinks being consumed by employees should be stored securely in a sealed heat proof container when they are interacting with children.
- 7.11 If Grey water systems or tanks are utilised at the service, it is important to ensure that taps and tanks are labelled with “do not drink” signs, and students are educated regarding these.

Hazards on excursions

- 7.12 As part of the approval procedure for all excursions, educators are required to conduct a risk assessment of the proposed excursion destination. This risk assessment should attempt to identify any hazards in the destination’s environment, including any risks associated with rivers, lakes, ponds, fountains and water features. As water hazards pose a significant risk to children, environments which have unobstructed access to these hazards require additional supervision to mitigate the risks of these unfamiliar environments.

8. Notification Requirements regarding drowning

- 8.1 In the event of either a fatal or non-fatal drowning incident, ELCs and SACS must immediately inform CECG and ACECQA. Depending on the severity of the incident, ELCs and SACS may also be required to inform WorkSafe ACT. ELC and SACS to follow the procedures set out in the [ELC and SAC incident reporting fact sheet](#).

Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) Notifications

ELCs and SACS are required to notify ACECQA of any serious incident which involves:

- The death of a child while being educated and cared for by the service, or following an incident while being cared for by the service;
- serious injury or trauma to, or illness of, a child while being educated and cared for by an education and care service which a reasonable person would consider required medical attention from a registered medical practitioner
- the attendance of emergency services at the education and care service, or in a situation where emergency services ought reasonably have been sought.

In the event that a drowning incident meets the above criteria, ACECQA should be notified by the [NQAITS](#), as soon as possible following the event. Notification must be made within 24 hours.

CECG Critical Incident Notification

ELCs and SACS must notify the General Manager Early Learning by phone immediately in the event of a fatal or non-fatal drowning incident.

ELC and SACS must make a notification through ESS (Employee Self Service) portal on the CECG intranet within 24hrs.

WorkSafe ACT Notifiable Incidents

WorkSafe ACT are required to be notified of any fatal drowning incident, or non-fatal drowning incident for which the individual is admitted to hospital. Initial notifications may be made via phone on 13 22 81 or in writing by completing a [Notification of incident](#) form.

9. Safe use of digital technologies and online environments

- 9.1 CECG ELC and SACS ensure they follow Australia's National Principals for Child Safe Organisations especially principle 8, which focuses on physical and online environments, promoting safety and wellbeing, and minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed, is particularly relevant to taking images and videos of children. CECG is committed to ensuring our services promote safe and secure environments for children to learn and develop to their full potential.
- 9.2 Personal mobile phones must not be used to take photos, images or videos of children at any CECG ELC. All ELC staff are to read and have access to the [ELC and SAC mobile phones and electronic devices fact sheet](#).
- 9.3 ELC and SACS staff must only use CECG service approved digital devices, and all images and videos are uploaded to a secure file, managed by CECG (such as Playground/Xplor, SharePoint) then deleted from the service device at the end of each year.
- 9.4 All ELC staff must not use their personal mobile phone to take images of children.
- 9.5 All ELC must store their personal mobile device in a safe and secure place (personal locker) that is located outside the classroom.
- 9.6 Only educational software programs and apps that have appropriate content and have been examined prior to allowing their use are used in CECG ELC's and SACS. Children must be supervised when using any technology when attending the service.

10. Definitions

- 10.1 **Regulation (r):** Education and Care Services National Regulations
- 10.2 **National Law (s):** Education and Care Services National Law Act.

11. Related Documents and Legislation

11.1 Related CECG Documents:

- [ELC and SAC Staffing Policy](#)
- [ELC and SAC Behaviour Support and Staff Interactions Policy](#)
- [ELC and SAC Excursion and Events Policy](#)
- [Supervision Risk Assessment & Minimisation Plan](#)

11.2 Legislation and Standards:

- [Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)
- [National Quality Standard](#) (schedule to the Education and Care Services National Regulations)

12. Contact

- 12.1 For support or further questions relating to this policy, contact the CECG General Manager, Early Learning Centres.