

## CHILDREN'S BELONGINGS POLICY

We acknowledge that children may bring certain personal belongings with them to the Vacation Care Service each day, and as such, it is important to clarify responsibilities. This policy therefore outlines the types of belongings that children may bring with them on a regular basis and the level of associated responsibility.

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships, which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

### RELATED POLICIES

Enrolment Policy Orientation of New Families Policy	Respect for children
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### PURPOSE

To ensure families and educators are aware of their responsibility regarding children's belonging including keeping them safe.

## SCOPE

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

## IMPLEMENTATION

It can be distressing for children to misplace their toys from home whilst attending Vacation Care. At times toys from home can also cause conflict between children. Children often want to share or show other children or staff special items from home, but these treasures may be inadvertently broken or lost. To save the upset and heartache, parents are requested to encourage children to leave their toys at home, unless they are essential to a child's emotional wellbeing and/or sense of belonging (security items).

We have numerous stimulating, challenging and educational toys and resources catering to a range of children's interests that are available to play with each day.

## NOMINATED SUPERVISORS, RESPONSIBLE PERSON, EDUCATORS AND STAFF WILL

- Allow children to bring personal belongings to share with others and understand that children may frequently have items in their bag. Items may include special items from gifts, holiday souvenirs, or items relating to a current interest.
- Facilitate opportunities for children to share their toys/news items with others to encourage:
  - social development
  - language skills
  - children to verbalise thoughts, fears, and feelings
  - broaden the cultural and social understandings of all children involved
  - and provide an opportunity for development of special interests for the group.
- remind families that if they allow children to bring items to the Vacation Care Service it is completely at the family's own risk
- re-iterate our policy, that if personal belongings are particularly valuable, fragile, or hold irreplaceable emotional value, it is recommended that the child bring in the item, show it to friends and educators, and then have the educator put them in a safe place. This allows for the child to share the excitement and experience without the risk of loss or damage.
- provide appropriate storage for lost property that will be available to children and families at all times

- manage any grievances or concerns related to lost, damaged, or stolen property of the children in accordance with the *Grievance and Complaints* policy and procedure
- request that if children wish to bring in DVD/Blu-ray, music, or electronic game, these should be discussed with management and be 'G-rated'. Although media rated 'PG' (Parental Guidance) is generally appropriate for children, it cannot be assumed that all parents want their children exposed to this rating.
- take as much care as possible in ensuring that personal belongings are returned to the correct family. To assist us with this we ask families to ensure that any item that can be labelled, either has the child's name on it, or the child's initials. If an item cannot be labelled, it is the parent's responsibility to advise an educator that their child has this item in their possession.
- We will encourage children who bring special belongings into care to place them in a special designated box to reduce the prospect of them becoming lost or broken. For added security this box will be placed in a position that requires the assistance of an educator to access.
- allow children to wear dress-up clothes to the service for specific 'mufti days' or special occasions.
- take as much care as possible in ensuring that children's clothing items are returned to their correct family. The labelling of all items can help us achieve this. However, the Service cannot take responsibility for damaged, lost or stolen items.
- actively encourage children to care for their belongings by:
  - reminding children appropriately when belongings need to be placed in storage. (For example, lunch box into bag.)
  - providing suitable storage to keep belongings safe-bag storage areas
  - negotiating a secure and safe position with families for any item or personal belonging that is either special, expensive, or at risk of being damaged but is nevertheless being left at the Vacation Care service.
- inform families through relevant newsletters and publications such as the Parent/Family handbook of appropriate personal belongings required at the Vacation Care service each day.

#### **FAMILIES WILL:**

- be responsible for providing the child with appropriate belongings and property required for active participation in all service activities and experiences. This property may include (but is not limited to):
  - enclosed footwear and weather appropriate clothing (if not in school uniform).
  - wide brim hat
  - suitable school bag (backpack).
  - appropriate food and lunch box for snacks (if required)

- ensure all personal property and belongings are clearly named or labelled.

**COMFORT TOYS:**

School age children rarely require a security/comfort item. However, if this is required (particularly by Kindergarten children) we recommend children bring something such as a favourite book, small soft toy etc.

We encourage families to communicate specific needs of their child directly with educators and staff.

**SOURCE:**

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Standard. ~~(2017)~~ (2020).

*Privacy Act 1988.*

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

**REVIEW**

POLICY REVIEWED: NOVEMBER 2020	NEXT POLICY REVIEW: 2021
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