

WRITING, REVIEWING & MAINTAINING POLICIES POLICY

While it is important to have policies and procedures in an Out of School Hours Care Service, it is equally important that the policies are regularly reviewed, and amendments made to cater for changes in legislation and researched best practice, and changes to service procedures that aim to support ongoing quality improvement.

Engagement in regular review of policies and procedures ensure that they align with quality practice within the Service and are responsive to feedback identified through the service's risk management and quality improvement systems. Guide to National Quality Framework, 2017 (amended 2020).

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
7.1.1	Service philosophy and purposes	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service.
7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.
7.2.1	Continuous improvement	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.
7.2.2	Educational leadership	The educational leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle.
7.2.3	Development of professionals	Educators, co-ordinations and staff members performance is regularly evaluated, and individual plans are in place to support learning and development.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

31	Conditions on service approval insurance
55-56	Quality Improvement Plan
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

PURPOSE

To ensure compliance with the National Quality Framework, our Vacation Care Service will review our policies and procedures on an annual basis, or more frequently if required due to changes having occurred within the Service, or if considered best practice in respect of current research. We aim to work in collaboration with our educators and families, gathering feedback when updating our policies and procedures to ensure that the needs of children being educated and cared for are always being met.

SCOPE

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

IMPLEMENTATION

Policies and procedures are an integral part of the documentation required to meet legislative requirements for all early childhood education and care services. Policies and procedures clearly outline the processes all staff employed by a service will follow and assist all staff to understand their roles and responsibilities. They ensure a consistent approach and embedded practice across all operations and practices of a service and help to inform families how the service operates.

MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE:

- our policies and procedures are underpinned by the *My Time Our Place Framework* and ECA Code of Ethics and address the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, National Quality Standard and other state/territory laws as applicable
- all policies and procedures will be made available for families and educators to view at all times
- all policies developed will be made in consultation with management, staff and families of children attending the Service
- our educators and staff will ensure that all policies and procedures are reviewed as per the document review routine, or more often if required (e.g. due to changes in regulations, legislation, and/or Vacation Care Service practices). This gives both families and educators opportunities to suggest aspects or areas that may need to be modified or improved.
- each document has a recommended review date stated in the 'Review' section of the policy document and changes are clearly made through version control
- educators, staff, and family members are invited to have input into the policies and procedures at any time of the year, not only at the scheduled review time for a particular policy
- policies include clear, simple statements and are presented in a logical format
- procedures include detailed descriptions of how each policy will be implemented within the service and provide step-by-step instructions to ensure each staff member or any other person can follow in a particular circumstance
- all policies will be signed, sourced/referenced, and dated at each review and educators and other staff will continuously seek out relevant new information and research to be included in policies in order to provide the best possible environment and practices
- policies will be informed by relevant authorities to ensure best practice- eg: KidSafe, Cancer Council, Red Nose
- all stakeholders at the Vacation Care Service must be informed of any changes to policies. This will occur in writing and be provided to families, educators, other staff, management and any other applicable individuals
- families will have the opportunity to revise and help plan policies via Newsletters and specific letters to families discussing the policy or a draft of the proposed policy and given the opportunity to respond

- all policies that are being either reviewed or developed will be displayed in the Vacation Care Service's foyer, so that all stakeholders are always aware of progress and can be involved in the review.

PROCEDURE FOR REVIEWING A POLICY

A policy has been flagged for review due to routine reflection, an incident, feedback, or the 'continuous improvement' process, including the policy review calendar.

- All major stakeholders are invited to review the policy and suggest amendments (this can be done via committee meeting, email, newsletters, and/or a display in the Service's foyer).
- A time frame of 14 days is given for all stakeholders to present information or feedback for the policy after which management will collate all suggestions and create a draft policy.
- The draft policy is made available to all major stakeholders, again via committee meeting, email, newsletters, and/or a display in the Service.
- A time frame of 7 days is given for stakeholders to respond to provide further suggestions/feedback. If the policy draft is agreed upon by all (no objections or further recommendations are received), the draft is reposted as the reviewed and/or amended Service's Policy.
- The Service encourages a holistic approach to policies. Whilst a schedule is maintained to ensure all policies are reviewed regularly, the Service may revise and if necessary, amend unscheduled policies based on the needs of the Service, particularly if there is an incident, regulation change, or feedback received.
- All policies will use information from reliable sources and provide dated references.

ACCORDANCE WITH THE REGULATIONS

Out of School Hour Care services must have policies and procedures in place relating to the categories listed in Regulation 168 of the National Regulations.

Services may have additional policies and procedures dependent upon their unique situation and operation requirements.

The Vacation Care Service must ensure that parents of children enrolled at the Service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have a significant impact on:

- the Service's provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; or
- the family's ability to utilise the Service.

The Vacation Care Service must ensure that parents of children enrolled at the Service are notified at least **14** days before making any change that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

If the Vacation Care Service considers that the notice period would pose a risk to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child enrolled at the Service, the approved provider must ensure that parents of children enrolled at the Service are notified as soon as practicable after making a change.

The Vacation Care Service must ensure that copies of the current policies and procedures are available for inspection at the Service upon request.

SOURCE

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011).
 Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2020).
 Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4th Ed.).
 Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED: JANUARY 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE: JANUARY 2022
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