



**CHILD-SER-POL-01**

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD SAFETY POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Northside Community Service Ltd (Northside) understands it is critical that Early Childhood Centres are safe, fit for purpose, clean, and well maintained to minimise potential risk to children, educators, and families who attend Northside Early Childhood Centres.
- 1.2. It is acknowledged by Northside that a range of hazards may exist within an Early Childhood Centre and that the likelihood of these hazards leading to child harm must be minimised.

### **2. Purpose**

- 2.1. The purpose of the Early Childhood Safety Policy is to detail the requirements to ensure the likelihood of incidents that may result in harm to children, educators, and families is minimised.

### **3. Application**

- 3.1. This policy applies to all employees of Northside, contractors, sub-contractors, and consultants employed by Northside, apprentices or trainees, students gaining work experience, and volunteers, whilst they are on Northside property or engaged in business that involves Northside Early Childhood Centre facilities.

### **4. Policy Owner and Review Requirements**

#### **4.1. Policy Owner**

- 4.1.1. The policy owner for the Early Childhood Safety Policy is the Director of Children's Services.

#### **4.2. Review Requirements**

- 4.2.1. This policy is to be reviewed annually.

### **5. Policy Statements**

#### **5.1. Mandatory Reporting**

- 5.1.1. Under the *Children and Young People Act 2008*, Northside educators and employees are required to make a Child Concern Report where they suspect a child is being, or has been, sexually abused, or is experiencing or has experienced non-accidental physical injuries by contacting Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) via phone: 1300 556 729 or online: [Make a Child Concern Report](#)
- 5.1.2. Under the *Education and Care Services Law* and the *Education and Care Services Regulations* Northside must notify the ACT Regulatory Authority, Children's Education and Care Assurance (CECA), online through the ACECQA NQA IT System within 24 hours of becoming aware of any incident or allegation that physical or sexual abuse of a child has occurred while the child or children are being educated and cared for by the service.

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- 5.1.3. For more information, please refer to the **Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy**.

## **5.2. Food Safety**

- 5.2.1. Northside is to maintain a current Food Business Registration in each Early Childhood Centre, in accordance with *ACT legislation*.
- 5.2.2. Each Early Childhood Centre must have at least one registered Food Safety Supervisor with their Food Safety Supervisor Certificate on file.
- 5.2.3. The Early Childhood Centre must have a current Food Safety Plan that is accessible to all who engage in food handling at the service.
- 5.2.4. Food is to be stored appropriately to minimise the likelihood of food spoilage in accordance with the Food Safety Plan.
- 5.2.5. Blue gloves must be available in all food preparation areas and worn when handling food.
- 5.2.6. Families are to provide the Centre with information on their children's food allergies, intolerances, or any other dietary requirements upon enrolment.
- 5.2.7. All children's dietary requirements are to be displayed in food preparation areas and in areas where food is served.
- 5.2.8. Fresh drinking water is to be available to all children at all times throughout the day, both indoors and outdoors.
- 5.2.9. When transporting food, Northside will ensure this occurs under appropriate circumstances including the use of cooler bags and ice packs where appropriate.
- 5.2.10. The **Food Transport Record** will be used in the event that food preparation occurs offsite and requires transportation to an event or location, documenting the safe transport of food where appropriate.

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### **5.3. Dealing with Infectious Diseases**

- 5.3.1. Northside aims to minimise the spread of infection throughout Early Childhood Centres, and to do this, it is sometimes necessary to exclude children who are infectious from the Centre until they are well again.
- 5.3.2. Outbreak procedures and exclusion periods are enforced to control the spread of vaccine preventable and other infectious diseases in Northside Early Childhood Centres. These apply to a range of conditions, including but not limited to vaccine preventable diseases and transmissible notifiable conditions.
- 5.3.3. The organisation, educators, and families have obligations (depending on the type of condition) to help prevent the spread of disease including:
- 5.3.3.1. Notification of a disease or condition (by families to the Early Childhood Centre and, for vaccine preventable diseases, to ACT Health Communicable Disease Control);
  - 5.3.3.2. Compliance with exclusion periods and related procedures; and
  - 5.3.3.3. Taking reasonable precautions.
- 5.3.4. To take reasonable precautions, Northside has procedures in place to keep children and educators safe. For more information, please refer to the **Illness and Infectious Disease Procedure**.

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- 5.3.5. Under the *Public Health Act 1997*, Early Childhood services are required to notify Communicable Disease Control if they are diagnosed with a communicable disease among children and/or staff in a 24-hour period. For example, Gastroenteritis is reported following two or more confirmed cases.
- 5.3.6. The Nominated Supervisor is to report all cases of children who have been diagnosed with a vaccine preventable disease, communicable disease, or other infection requiring notification to the ACT Health Communicable Disease Control on: (02) 5124 9213 or [cdc@act.gov.au](mailto:cdc@act.gov.au)
- 5.3.7. Limit the spread of infectious diseases by ensuring appropriate infection control practices are adhered to, year-round. Infection control is important to minimise transmission and to control outbreaks in Early Childhood Centres.
- 5.3.8. Northside follows ACT Health's guidelines on [National Health and Medical Research Council](#) to determine exclusion periods and infection control measures for different infectious diseases.
- 5.3.9. Northside children and staff will be excluded for infectious disease as recommended by the [National Health and Medical Research Council](#) or as advised by the Communicable Disease Control unit of ACT Health.
- 5.3.10. Children and educators who are not immunised will be excluded from the Centre if there is an outbreak of vaccine preventable disease, or if one is suspected, until the Centre is clear of the illness and the minimum exclusion period has passed. Children for whom the Centre does not have a complete immunisation record will be treated as unimmunised.
- 5.3.11. For more information on how to minimise the spread of infection throughout Early Childhood Centres please refer to the **Cleaning Procedure**.

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- 5.3.12. A confirmed communicable disease is required to be reported to CECA as this constitutes a risk to children's health and safety. For more information on how to report this to CECA, please see the **Early Childhood Notifiable Events Procedure**.
- 5.3.13. For more information on infection control and reporting an outbreak, please refer to the **Illness and Infectious Disease Procedure**.

#### **5.4. Protecting children from harm from people who work at Northside**

- 5.4.1. Northside will maintain a rigorous and consistent recruitment, screening, and selection process by thorough interviews, thorough reference checking, and only engaging staff, volunteers, and students who hold a current Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) registration.
- 5.4.2. Reference checking and confirming the prospective employee holds a current WWVP registration is to be completed before employment commences.
- 5.4.3. Any complaint of inappropriate conduct by staff, volunteers, or students is to be taken seriously and acted on promptly.
- 5.4.4. Any complaint is to be reported as required to the Ombudsman, the Department of Education, Child and Youth Protection Services, and/or ACT Policing. For more information see the **Early Childhood Notifiable Events Procedure**.
- 5.4.5. Northside educators, teachers, and volunteers will not:
- 5.4.5.1. Put children at risk of abuse;
  - 5.4.5.2. Be unnecessarily physical with children;
  - 5.4.5.3. Have discussions of a mature or adult nature when children are present;
  - 5.4.5.4. Develop special relationships with individual children;

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- 5.4.5.5. Discriminate against children or express personal views on culture, race, or sexuality;
- 5.4.5.6. Leave children alone with an individual educator; or
- 5.4.5.7. Assist children with changing and toileting when they no longer need assistance.

## **5.5. Medical Conditions and Medication Administration**

### **5.5.1. Medical Conditions**

- 5.5.1.1. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that any child with a medical condition and/or health concern has an individualised **Medical Action Plan**, and that a **Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan** is developed for the child in consultation with the child's family.
- 5.5.1.2. **All Medical Action Plans and Risk Minimisation and Communication Plans** must be reviewed every 12 months, in consultation with the child's family.
- 5.5.1.3. Additional reviews will be completed in consultation with the child's family if there is a change to the child's medical condition and/or health concern.
- 5.5.1.4. All educators working with children identified as having a **Medical Action Plan** or specific health need must be aware of the necessary procedures to follow in the event of a medical emergency involving the child, or any incident relating to the child's medical or health needs.
- 5.5.1.5. All educators, relevant staff members and students are required to be informed of and sign an **Educator Acknowledgement Sheet** of each child's **Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan** and any associated **Medical Action Plans** to indicate they have read and understand the documents.
- 5.5.1.6. When a child's **Medical Action Plan** and **Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan** are updated every 12 months, all educators are required to read and sign a new **Educator Acknowledgement Sheet** of the updated Plans.

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- 5.5.1.7. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that a **Medication Administration Form** is developed for each child with medical condition and/or health concern requiring medication at the Early Childhood Centre and that medication is administered as outlined in the **Early Childhood Safety Policy**.
- 5.5.1.8. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that a family or emergency contact of a child are notified as soon as practicable in the occurrence of any incident relating to their child's medical condition and/or health concern, inclusive of a verbal notification and the completion of an **Incident, Injury, and Illness Record**.
- 5.5.1.9. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that enrolment records for each child outline the details of persons permitted to authorise the administration of medication to the child and that accurate medication records are maintained on the premises.
- 5.5.1.10. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that medication forms are stored in a secure and confidential manner and that records are archived for the prescribed length of time. For more information on storage of documents, please refer to **section 5.6** of the **Governance Policy**.
- 5.5.1.11. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that all educators, relevant staff members, students, and volunteers receive information about the **Early Childhood Safety Policy** and **Medical Conditions Procedure** during their induction.
- 5.5.1.12. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure families are informed of the **Early Childhood Safety Policy** and **Medical Conditions Procedure**, and the need to ensure that safe practices are adhered to for the wellbeing of both the child and educators.
- 5.5.1.13. Families of an enrolled child are required to advise the Centre if their child has specific health care needs, allergies, or medical conditions, including the provision of a **Medical Action Plan** to

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Northside, which, in the event of an incident relating to the child's health needs arises, will be followed by Northside staff.

5.5.1.14. Families of an enrolled child are required to provide any medication outlined on their child's **Medical Action Plan** prior to commencing enrolment. The child is unable to attend the service without prescribed medication in relation to their specific medical condition and/or health concern.

5.5.1.15. Relevant allergens that pose a risk to children will be communicated to families using signage in a prominent and accessible location within the Centre.

5.5.1.16. For further information on procedures relating to the management of medical conditions, including asthma, diabetes, or a diagnosis that a child is at risk of anaphylaxis, please refer to the **Administration of First Aid Procedure**.

#### 5.5.2. Medication Administration

5.5.2.1. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that enrolment records for each child outline the details of persons permitted to authorise the administration of medication to the child. These records are to be amended if there is a change in family circumstance. These records are to include written consent from parent or guardian to administer medications in an emergency (e.g., Emergency Asthma Kit).

5.5.2.2. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that medication being administered to a child attending the Early Childhood Centre:

5.5.2.2.1. Is in its original container with a chemist label clearly showing the name of the child and required dosage; and

5.5.2.2.2. Is within the expiry/use by date.

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- 5.5.2.3. A signed authorisation to administer medication must be signed by the family or person named on the enrolment form as authorised to consent to the administration of medication.
- 5.5.2.4. All medication **must** be administered as prescribed by a medical practitioner and in line with relevant first aid guidelines to ensure continuing health for the child and the child's safety and wellbeing.
- 5.5.2.5. All medication administered to children, is to be administered by the Nominated Supervisor or a Responsible Person, the administration is to be witnessed and form secondarily signed by an educator with a minimum Diploma qualification.
- 5.5.2.6. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that a family or emergency contact of a child are notified as soon as practicable in the occurrence of any medication administration relating to their child's medical or health needs, inclusive of a verbal notification and the completion of an **Incident, Injury, and Illness Record**.
- 5.5.2.7. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that if medication is administered without authorisation in the event of an asthma, diabetic, anaphylactic, or medical condition emergency, that the family is notified as soon as practicable, inclusive of a verbal notification and the completion of an **Incident, Injury, and Illness Record**.
- 5.5.2.8. Medications are to be stored in a labelled and locked medication container that is **inaccessible** to children, and refrigerated only if the medication label advises to do so.
- 5.5.2.9. Two educators must always be present when administering medications. The educator administering the medication **must** have a Diploma of Children's Services qualification at a **minimum**. The educator administering the medication **must** have an approved First Aid qualification in accordance with current legislation and regulations.

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5.5.2.10. Educators are responsible for checking the **Medication Administration Form**, the prescription label, and the amount of medication being administered. Both educators must sign, date, and note the time on the **Medication Administration Form**.

5.5.2.11. Medications are to be returned to the locked medication container immediately after use.

5.5.2.12. If a child's individual medication is due to expire or is running low, Nominated Supervisors are to ensure the family is notified that replacement medication is required.

5.5.2.13. Northside will not administer any teething gels.

5.5.2.14. Any nappy or topical creams (with the exception of Sudocrem, which is provided by Northside) require a chemist label prior to application on children.

## **5.6. First Aid**

### **5.6.1. First Aid Kits**

5.6.1.1. There will be a suitable amount of first aid kits in every Early Childhood Centre, with clear signage to indicate the location of each first aid kit.

5.6.1.2. The Centre will have available Centre-based EpiPen and Asthma Reliever Puffer for use in the event of a medical emergency. These will be stored in location accessible to educators and clearly labelled.

5.6.1.3. Portable first aid kits are to be taken on all excursions.

5.6.1.4. First aid kits are to be inspected every three months for completeness and for expiry dates for any medication, cream, or lotion.

5.6.1.5. Medications that have passed the expiry date will be disposed in a bin that is **inaccessible** to children.

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- 5.6.1.6. A list of first aid contents that are close to expiry or running low is to be provided to the Nominated Supervisor who will arrange for the purchase of the replacement supplies.

#### **5.6.2. Administration of First Aid**

- 5.6.2.1. First aid will be administered when required in response to unpredictable illness or injury at the time that illness or injury occurs to preserve life, prevent a condition from worsening, and to promote recovery.
- 5.6.2.2. All educators will attend regular ACECQA approved first aid training and will undertake approved training in CPR and anaphylaxis and asthma management as often as required.
- 5.6.2.3. A first aid qualified educator will be rostered on for opening and closing shifts.
- 5.6.2.4. All those identified as a Responsible Person will hold current first aid qualifications as part of their suitability for the role.
- 5.6.2.5. A First Aid Officer is appointed at each Northside Early Childhood Centre.
- 5.6.2.6. When a person or child at the service requires emergency medical attention, an ambulance will be called.
- 5.6.2.7. For more information on administering first aid, please refer to the **Administration of First Aid Procedure**.

#### **5.5.3 Managing Temperatures in Children**

- 5.5.3.1 If a child has been administered Paracetamol or Ibuprofen, they are unable to attend a Northside Early Childhood Centre.

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- 5.5.3.2 In the event a child develops a temperature of 38 degrees or above, their family and/or authorized contacts will be called and asked to collect the child from the service immediately.
- 5.5.3.3 In the event a child develops signs and symptoms that require urgent attention, or a temperature of, or above 39.5 degrees, an ambulance (000) will be called immediately.
- 5.5.3.4 Each Northside Early Childhood Centre will have Paracetamol (Panadol) available to administer in an emergency situation. **Paracetamol will only be administered under the direction of emergency services or a medical practitioner.**
- 5.5.3.5 All medication administered to children, is to be administered by the Nominated Supervisor or a Responsible Person, the administration is to be witnessed and form secondarily signed by an educator with a minimum Diploma qualification.
- 5.5.3.6 For further information relating to managing a temperature in a child, please see the **Administration of First Aid Procedure.**

## **5.7. Sun Protection**

- 5.7.1. The Sun Protection Policy is in force from the beginning of August through to the end of May with particular care taken between 10am and 2pm (11am to 3pm during daylight savings time) when UV levels are at their peak; specifically, when UV levels are above 3.
- 5.7.2. Children are to wear the following when outside:
- 5.7.2.1. Hats that cover their faces, necks, and ears; broad brimmed, bucket, or legionnaire's style. **Caps are not acceptable;**
  - 5.7.2.2. Shirts or dresses that cover their shoulders when outside, no strappy tops or singlets for outdoor play; and

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- 5.7.2.3. A minimum of SPF30+ broad spectrum sunscreen that has been applied at least 20 minutes before going outside, with assistance from educators.
- 5.7.3. Children who do not have an appropriate hat or clothing will be offered alternate experiences either indoors or within appropriate shaded areas of the playground under educator supervision.
- 5.7.4. Infants (under 6 months of age) are not to be directly exposed to sunlight when UV levels are 3 or higher.
- 5.7.5. Infants (under 6 months of age) are not to have sunscreen applied, unless advised by a medical professional.
- 5.7.6. Northside will provide sunscreen for all attending children, unless otherwise authorised by the family of the child. The sunscreen will be SPF30+ minimum.

## **5.8. Water Safety**

- 5.8.1. Children are to always be supervised in and around any water including water troughs, ponds, toilets, and any other water-based activities.
- 5.8.2. Water containers of any sort will be emptied or covered when not in use.
- 5.8.3. Staff are to check outdoor areas prior to use for water hazards, such as puddles and drains, especially after rain. These are to be removed if found.
- 5.8.4. Buckets in which soiled articles are soaked are to have a secure lid, be used in a place that children cannot access, be emptied after use, and stored securely.
- 5.8.5. Laundry doors are to be always kept closed. If the laundry door handle is accessible to children, the door must be locked or latched.

## **5.9. Animals in the Environment**

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#### **5.9.1. Pets**

- 5.9.1.1. Children must be always supervised when interacting with pets or animals.
- 5.9.1.2. All pets and their enclosures are to be kept clean and hygienic.
- 5.9.1.3. Any health or safety risk for the children that may be caused by animals, such as asthma and allergies, are to be managed accordingly.
- 5.9.1.4. Pet food is to be kept out of reach of children at all times.
- 5.9.1.5. Pets and animals are not to have access to children's bedding or toys, food preparation areas, eating surfaces, or utensils.
- 5.9.1.6. A risk assessment is to be conducted in relation to animals visiting the Early Childhood Centre as part of the program.
- 5.9.1.7. Children and educators who engage with the pet by touching it or the pet's bedding, food, or house, will wash their hands thoroughly in accordance with the **Handwashing Procedure** displayed at all handwashing sinks.

#### **5.9.2. Animals Other than Pets or Invited Visitors**

- 5.9.2.1. There are situations that spontaneously occur involving animals. For example, there may be a situation where an animal has made its way into the Early Childhood Centre.
- 5.9.2.2. If the animal is potentially dangerous (e.g., a snake, spider, or large dog) an appropriate authority is to be contacted for assistance.
- 5.9.2.3. At no time is a potentially dangerous animal to be approached or touched by children, their families, or educators.

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#### **5.9.3. Pests and Vermin**

- 5.9.3.1. Pest control will occur at Early Childhood Centres quarterly.
- 5.9.3.2. If pests and vermin are seen, the Nominated Supervisor is to be informed immediately and rectification measures are to be arranged.

#### **5.10. Safe Storage of Dangerous Goods**

- 5.10.1. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that there are appropriate storage facilities in the Early Childhood Centre in which dangerous products are stored.
- 5.10.2. Where possible, Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that dangerous products are stored in areas of the Centre not accessible to children, or in cupboards fitted with child-proof locks or latches.
- 5.10.3. Nominated Supervisors are to develop a hazardous substances register. The register will record the product name and must have an accompanying Safety Data Sheet (SDS) available for each item on the register.
- 5.10.4. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that there are emergency procedures and practices for accidental spills and contamination and corresponding first aid plans for all dangerous goods handled and stored at the Early Childhood Centre.
- 5.10.5. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that all educators are aware of the emergency procedures and practices for accidental spills and contamination and corresponding first aid plans for all dangerous goods handled and stored at the Early Childhood Centre.
- 5.10.6. All Centre personnel are to wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when handling dangerous materials.
- 5.10.7. All Centre employees are to comply with the 'directions for use' on the product label.

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- 5.10.8. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that all dangerous materials are disposed of safely, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions on the product label and workplace health and safety (WHS) regulations.
- 5.10.9. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure that daily **Safety Checklists** are completed to ensure that any dangerous products used within the Early Childhood Centre have current SDS sheets and are stored appropriately.
- 5.10.10. All dangerous products are to be stored in their original labelled containers that preferably have child resistant lids or caps.

#### **5.11. Sharps and Sharp Objects**

- 5.11.1. Outdoor environments are to be checked daily for sharps and sharp objects prior to children entering the outdoor environments, with particular attention paid to ensuring fence lines are clear and safe, in accordance with the daily **Outdoor Checklist**.
- 5.11.2. Classroom environments are to be checked daily for any hazards prior to children entering the classroom environments, in accordance with the daily **Opening Checklist**.
- 5.11.3. If sharps or other hazardous materials are identified in the daily check of both outdoor and classroom environments, educators are to refer to the **Cleaning Procedure** for how to dispose of the object(s) safely.
- 5.11.4. If items break that may be sharp and pose a risk to children, such as glasses or crockery, educators must dispose of these items in a bin that is **inaccessible** to children and in a way that minimises risk of harm to those emptying the bin, in line with the **Cleaning Procedure**.

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- 5.11.5. Educators are responsible for monitoring classroom and outdoor environments throughout the day to check for hazards.

## **5.12. Hot Water/Hot Surfaces**

- 5.12.1. Children are to be prevented from entering kitchen facilities.
- 5.12.2. The thermostat on the hot water system is to be set to a medium temperature (43.5 degrees Celsius).
- 5.12.3. Children requiring bathing will be bathed using a washcloth and warm water or a shower.
- 5.12.4. Educators will not consume hot drinks in any area accessible to children.
- 5.12.5. No “bar heaters” or equivalent are to be used within any Early Childhood Centre.

## **5.13. Smoke Free Environment**

- 5.13.1. Northside endeavours to protect anyone who uses Northside services or is employed by Northside by reducing exposure to tobacco and other smoke, as well as aerosol or vapour (whether containing nicotine or not) generated by e-cigarettes, on the premises of any properties managed by Northside.
- 5.13.2. Northside is required to adhere to relevant law and regulations around smoking, including ACT smoking laws, Cancer Council advice, regulations on e-cigarettes, tobacco control regulations, and ACT Health guidelines.
- 5.13.3. No smoking or vaping is to occur within an Early Childhood Centre. Employees, and those who use our services, are **NOT** to smoke within view of the Early Childhood Centre if choosing to smoke on a break.
- 5.13.4. All employees, and those who use our services, must minimise the smell of tobacco on their clothing after they have smoked. If clothing smells of tobacco smoke, employees must change their clothes.

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5.13.5. For more information, please refer to the **Smoke Free Environments Procedure**.

#### **5.14. Objects Prone to Falling/Tipping**

- 5.14.1. All objects prone to falling/tipping (including bookcases and other furniture) are to be secured in a manner that prevents them from falling/tipping even when force is applied. These objects will be secured by a professional maintenance company to ensure that they are secured properly.
- 5.14.2. No items are to be stored on top of cupboards above head height to ensure that objects do not pose a risk of falling from a height.

#### **5.15. Outdoor Physical Environment**

- 5.15.1. Sandpits are to be raked thoroughly and checked for hazards daily, prior to children entering the outdoor environments in accordance with the daily **Outdoor Checklist**.
- 5.15.2. Sandpits are to be covered every evening.
- 5.15.3. Sand in the sandpit is to be replaced annually or as needed.
- 5.15.4. When the height of a piece of equipment (A-Frame, balance beam) is below 60cm, a space of 1 metre from the highest point moving away from the equipment is to have an approved soft fall surface (solid material and/or loose material).
- 5.15.5. When the height of a piece of equipment (A-Frame, balance beam) is above 60cm, a space of 1.5 metres from the highest point moving away from the equipment is to have an approved soft fall surface (solid material and/or loose material).
- 5.15.6. Sandpits are to be maintained at a depth of no lower than 30cm.
- 5.15.7. Tan bark and other loose materials are to be maintained at a depth of no lower than 30cm.

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- 5.15.8. The space between a swing seat (bucket style, bench style, tyre) and the ground must not exceed 40cm.
- 5.15.9. When designing, installing and maintaining playgrounds, entrapment hazards are to be minimised and if unable to be eliminated a risk assessment must be completed.

## **5.16. Supervision**

- 5.16.1. Northside will roster for and maintain the required educator to child ratio based on the ages and number of children being educated and cared for.
- 5.16.2. Nominated Supervisors are to support all educators to develop, maintain, and review under the following conditions:
- 5.16.2.1. Change of skills;
  - 5.16.2.2. Ages mix;
  - 5.16.2.3. Dynamics;
  - 5.16.2.4. Size of the group of children being supervised;
  - 5.16.2.5. When new equipment is purchased/ installed;
  - 5.16.2.6. When an incident occurs within the facility.
- 5.16.3. Supervision Plans are to be developed for each area of the learning environment, and displayed to ensure that:
- 5.16.3.1. Children are supervised in all areas of the service;
  - 5.16.3.2. Children are always within sight and hearing distance, including during eating or drinking, toileting, sleeping or resting, and during transition routines;
  - 5.16.3.3. Children are unable to access unsupervised or unsafe areas in the service; and
  - 5.16.3.4. Children are closely supervised when they are in a situation that presents a higher risk of injury—for example, on an excursion near roads or water.

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- 5.16.4. Head counts of children must be conducted at least 3 times a day to verify all children are accounted for and recorded within the **Educator Log** book.
- 5.16.5. Nominated Supervisors are to ensure new and casual educators are inducted in relation to the supervision arrangements and are to sign an acknowledgement within the **Early Childhood Induction** document.
- 5.16.6. For more information, please refer to the **Supervision Procedure**.

## **5.17. Excursion**

- 5.17.1. Northside will plan for excursions carefully.
- 5.17.2. Risk assessments will be conducted before any excursion.
- 5.17.3. Northside will seek families' authorisations in writing before any excursion, after a risk assessment has been completed.
- 5.17.4. If the excursion is a regular outing, authorisation is required once a year. All families will be asked to sign permission forms for regular excursions on enrolment and at the beginning of each subsequent year.
- 5.17.5. All excursions will have a Responsible Person placed in charge of the excursion.
- 5.17.6. Supervision will promote the safety and wellbeing of all children on the excursion, considering possible risks. The Nominated Supervisor may choose to organise additional adults to attend the excursion to assist with increased supervision.
- 5.17.7. Head counts of children on excursions must be conducted at least every 15 minutes and during times of transition.

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- 5.17.8. Families will be encouraged to participate in excursions. If the family member wishes to bring their child's sibling, the sibling will remain under the supervision of the parent/guardian.
- 5.17.9. Family members/students will not to be left in sole charge of children and must be always supervised by an educator. Family members and students will not be counted in ratio.
- 5.17.10. Northside will only use buses that are fitted with seat belts. Any vehicle that is used in the transport of children on an excursion will be fitted with child seats (forward facing restraints or booster seats), which will be used correctly for the children, and have been checked at an approved child restraint fitting centre.
- 5.17.11. Only those with an approved bus driving license will be authorised to drive the bus being used during excursions.
- 5.17.12. Where there are significant water hazards (such as rivers, lakes, or beaches), risk management strategies will be implemented such as higher adult to child ratios.
- 5.17.13. Where an excursion location presents a higher level of risk to children's, employees and families health and safety a higher child to educator ratio will be used, the number of head counts during the excursion will also be increased and more frequently conducted.

## **5.18. Risk Assessments**

- 5.18.1. A risk assessment of potential emergencies must be developed and maintained by the Nominated Supervisor.
- 5.18.2. Risk assessments must be developed for any activity, excursion, incursion or any other event significant to the centre.
- 5.18.3. Risk assessments must be documented using the approved **Risk Assessment Template** and stored in an easily accessible and available location.

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## **6. Breaches and Penalties**

### **6.1. Breaches**

- 6.1.1. Breaches of this policy must be reported immediately to the Chief Executive Officer (or nominee). Confidentiality will be maintained where appropriate.

### **6.2. Penalties**

- 6.2.1. If Northside believes that unethical or illegal activities inconsistent with Northsides' purpose or mission have occurred, these processes will be followed:
- 6.2.1.1. An investigation will take place to determine potential breaches.
  - 6.2.1.2. Where an employee has breached this Policy, and the offence is judged to be serious, the procedures outlined in the Northside **Grievance Policy** will be followed.
  - 6.2.1.3. Where a breach involves illegal activities, Northside has an obligation to report these to the relevant external law enforcement agencies, and individuals may be subject to prosecution.

## **7. Audits**

- 7.1. All records will be subject to ongoing assurance and audits. All records belong to Northside. In most cases, these will be admissible as evidence and are subject to the relevant Territory and Federal Laws.
- 7.2. The Director of Compliance and Quality is responsible for the development and audit plan overseeing Early Childhood Centre compliance and facilities maintenance.
- 7.3. The Director of Compliance and Quality is to provide a report to the CEO in relation to the results of audits undertaken during the period.

## **8. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 8.1. Roles and responsibilities for security are detailed below:
- 8.1.1.1. **The Approved Provider (Northside) is responsible for:**

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- 8.1.1.2. Arranging for each Early Childhood Centre to be cleaned by professional cleaners at the end of each day, and for a deep clean to take place in the event of an illness outbreak;
- 8.1.1.3. Developing systems to ensure that daily checks and risk assessments of the environments are documented and that where repairs, cleaning or maintenance are identified, they are attended to promptly; and
- 8.1.1.4. Ensuring policies and procedures are subject to regular review.

**8.1.2. Nominated Supervisors are responsible for:**

- 8.1.2.1. Developing systems to ensure that the daily cleaning of the Early Childhood Centre is carried out to a satisfactory standard;
- 8.1.2.2. Ensuring that the educators are familiar with policies and procedures related to cleaning and maintaining safe environments for children;
- 8.1.2.3. Ensuring that daily checks and risk assessments of the environment are conducted and documented;
- 8.1.2.4. Responding to any identified risk, repairs, cleaning, or maintenance issue promptly;
- 8.1.2.5. Ensuring all educators, employees & families are notified of any changes to policies and procedures;
- 8.1.2.6. Ensuring policies and procedures are kept available and accessible; and
- 8.1.2.7. Ensuring employee's & educators follow policies and procedures.

**8.1.3. Educators are responsible for:**

- 8.1.3.1. Identifying when the building, premises, furniture, or equipment require cleaning or maintenance and deal with the issue immediately by cleaning as required or removing damaged furniture or equipment. If the issue cannot be dealt with immediately, or maintenance or thorough

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cleaning is required, the educator must notify the Nominated Supervisor;

- 8.1.3.2. Spot cleaning environments to ensure cleanliness and hygiene is maintained throughout the day;
- 8.1.3.3. Ensuring that cleaning duties do not compromise the education and care or supervision of children at any time;
- 8.1.3.4. Involving children in discussions about health and safety issues and supporting children to develop guidelines to keep the environment safe for all;
- 8.1.3.5. Role model cleaning practices for the children and encourage children to be involved in the cleaning of the environment where appropriate; and
- 8.1.3.6. Following policies and procedures.

## **9. Associated Documents**

### **8.1 Associated Northside Documents**

- 9.1.1. **Grievance Policy**
- 9.1.2. **Bottle Preparation and Storage Procedure**
- 9.1.3. **Illness & infectious Disease Procedure**
- 9.1.4. **Nappy Changing and Toileting Procedure**
- 9.1.5. **Cleaning Procedure**
- 9.1.6. **Smoke Free Environment Policy**
- 9.1.7. **Governance Policy**

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- 9.1.8. **Mandatory Reporting and Child Protection Policy**
- 9.1.9. **Supervision Procedure**
- 9.1.10. **Medication Administration Form**
- 9.1.11. **Medical Conditions Procedure**
- 9.1.12. **Administration of First Aid Procedure**
- 9.1.13. **Risk Minimisation & Communication Plan**
- 9.1.14. **Early Childhood Induction**
- 9.1.15. **Safety Checklists**

## **8.2 Additional Associated Documents**

- 8.2.1 [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- 8.2.2 [ACECQA Information Sheet: Nominated Supervisor](#)
- 8.2.3 [Sun safety | Cancer Council](#)

## **10. Definitions**

- 10.1. **Northside-** Northside Community Service, including all programs operated by the organisation.
- 10.2. **Employee-** Means the employees of Northside, and contractors, sub-contractors and consultants employed by Northside, apprentices or trainees, students gaining work experience, and volunteers, whilst they are on Northside property or engaged on Northside business.
- 10.3. **Nominated Supervisor-** The qualified staff member (usually the Centre Director) who has been legally appointed with relevant documentation as the Nominated Supervisor of a particular center.
- 10.4. **Responsible Person on Duty-** The person in charge of the service when the Nominated Supervisor is absent and marked as such on the Responsible Person Record.
- 10.5. **Educator-** Early Childhood Practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings.

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- 10.6. **ACECQA: Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority-** The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
- 10.7. **CECA: Children’s Education and Care Assurance-** The regulatory authority in the ACT that undertakes investigation, compliance, enforcement, and assessment and rating functions against the National Quality Standard.
- 10.8. **Hazard-** A danger or risk to the health and safety of children, educators, and any visitors or volunteers.

## 11. Document Control and Version History

### 11.1. Document Control

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Document Reference:</b>              | Early Childhood Safety Policy  |
| <b>Status:</b>                          | Approved   |
| <b>Approval Authority:</b>              | Anna Whitty – Chief Executive Officer  |
| <b>Signature of Approval Authority:</b> |   |
| <b>Approval Date:</b>                   | 11/5/2023  |
| <b>Effective Date:</b>                  | 11/5/2023  |
| <b>Review Date:</b>                     | 11/5/2024  |
| <b>Functional Unit:</b>                 | Community Services <i>or</i> Children’s Services   |
| <b>Enquiries Contact:</b>               | Name: Anna Whitty<br>Position: Chief Executive Officer<br>Phone: 02 6171 8000<br>Email: <a href="mailto:anna.whitty@northside.asn.au">anna.whitty@northside.asn.au</a> |

### 11.2. Version History

| Revision Date | Version No. | Brief reason for change | Reference Sections |
|---------------|-------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
|               |             |                         |                    |

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