



CHILD-SER-POL-02

EARLY CHILDHOOD GOVERNANCE POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Northside Community Service Ltd (Northside) understands that it is critical to have robust and effective governance strategies in place to manage each Northside Early Childhood Centre, and to ensure that each Centre is compliant with the National Quality Framework and meets or exceeds the National Quality Standard.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of the Early Childhood Governance Policy is to detail the requirements of Northside Early Childhood Centres to ensure that there are robust and effective governance strategies in place to ensure that Northside is providing the highest quality early education for children.

3. Scope

- 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 Governance 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 Dealing with Complaints and Appeals

- 5.1.1 Any complaint raised by a child, family member, carer, authorised contact, visitor, or external stakeholder will be handled promptly and professionally.
- 5.1.2 A complaint that must be reported to the Regulatory Authority is any complaint that:
- 5.1.2.1 Suggests a real and serious or immediate risk to the health, safety, and wellbeing of a child;
 - 5.1.2.2 Alleges that the safety, health, or wellbeing of a child may have been compromised; and/or
 - 5.1.2.3 Suggests that there may have been a contravention of the *National Law*.
- 5.1.3 Northside will ensure that the name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints may be addressed is clearly visible at the service.

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- 5.1.4 If the service receives a complaint that meets the threshold outlined in 5.1.2, the Nominated Supervisor will notify the Regulatory Authority (CECA) in writing within 24 hours of the complaint being received.
- 5.1.5 The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that they manage the complaint directly (where possible), promptly, and professionally. For more information on the immediate response to complaints for Educators and Nominated Supervisors, please see the **Complaints and Appeals Procedure**.
- 5.1.6 For more information on reporting a notifiable complaint to CECA, please refer to the **Early Childhood Notifiable Events Procedure**.
- 5.1.7 If the complainant is dissatisfied with the complaint outcome, an appeal may be possible.

5.2. Notifiable Event

- 5.2.1 Under the Regulatory requirements, Northside is required to report certain types of complaints and incidents to relevant regulatory authorities and the CEO. Northside will determine whether the complaint or appeal is a notifiable event and report accordingly.
- 5.2.2 For more information on notifiable events, please refer to the **Complaints and Appeals Procedure** and the **Early Childhood Notifiable Event Procedure**.

5.3 Staffing Arrangements

- 5.3.1 Educator to child ratio and qualification requirements are to be maintained in line with the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations* at all times.
- 5.3.2 Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios.

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5.3.3 Northside will maintain the required educator to child ratio, based on the ages and number of children being educated and cared for, in accordance with the table below:

Age Group	Educator to Child Ratio
For children from Birth to 24 months of age	1:4
For children from 24 months to less than 36 months of age	1:5
For children from 36 months of age and over	1:11

5.3.4 Northside Early Childhood Centres will meet or exceed the staffing arrangements as required in the National Quality Framework.

5.3.5 In all Northside Early Childhood Centres:

5.3.5.1 The Centre Director is formally appointed as the Nominated Supervisor (per the *National Education and Care Regulations*);

5.3.5.2 The Centre Director is formally appointed as the Educational Leader (per *National Education and Care Regulations*);

5.3.5.3 These roles will be formally consented to in writing via the **Nominated Supervisor Consent Form** and **Educational Leader Consent Form**; and

5.3.5.4 Centre Directors are required to hold (or be actively working towards) their Bachelor of Education (0-5).

5.3.6 Per the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the Nominated Supervisor accepts day-to-day responsibility for the running of the Centre. Any time they are on the premises, they are deemed to be the Responsible Person on Duty.

5.3.7 Any time the Nominated Supervisor is not on the premises, they are to ensure that they have determined an educator to be the Responsible Person on Duty.

5.3.8 A person holding a current first aid, anaphylaxis and emergency asthma management training is in attendance at any place where children are being educated and cared for by the service.

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- 5.3.9 All educators appointed as a Responsible Person on Duty must sign a **Responsible Person Consent Form** and their appointment of Responsible Person on Duty (for any length of time) must be recorded in the **Responsible Person Record** and displayed in the service.
- 5.3.10 In the event of the Nominated Supervisor being on longer periods of leave (such as annual leave), the responsibility for determining the Responsible Person on Duty will be assumed by the person acting in the role of Centre Director during that time.
- 5.3.11 Per the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the regulatory authority must be informed if the Nominated Supervisor of a service changes, and of any changes to a Nominated Supervisor's name or contact information.
- 5.3.12 **Educator Logs** must be available in all classrooms, and educators are required to sign in and out whenever entering or exiting the classroom.
- 5.3.13 All employees will engage in regular training and professional development opportunities relevant to their role and Northside's strategic plan.

5.4 Leadership and Service Management

- 5.4.1 Northside recognises that risk management is fundamental to the effective management and operation of quality Early Childhood Centres, and that it plays an integral role in day-to-day management and decision making at all levels in the organisation. To manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of quality Early Childhood Centres, Northside has the following systems in place:

5.4.1.1 Risk Register;

5.4.1.2 Risk Management Plan; and

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5.4.1.3 Risk Management Policy.

- 5.4.2 Northside will ensure that effective self-assessment and quality improvement processes are in place, including regular compliance and quality audits and policy reviews, to ensure that all Northside policies, procedures, and practices align with the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*. For more information, please see the **Compliance Audit and Assurance Policy**.
- 5.4.3 Nominated Supervisors at all Northside Early Childhood Centres must develop and maintain a **Quality Improvement Plan**.
- 5.4.4 Northside will ensure that administrative processes are in place to comply with regulations around children's enrolment. For more information, please see the **Enrolment and Orientation Policy**.
- 5.4.5 Northside will ensure that the prescribed documentation, including children's attendance records, are stored in accordance with the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*. For further information please see the **Archiving Procedure**.
- 5.4.6 Northside will ensure there is adequate administrative space available to meet administration requirements.
- 5.4.7 Nominated Supervisors will ensure they display the prescribed information as stipulated within the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*.
- 5.4.8 Northside will implement processes to ensure that all employees are aware of their Mandatory Reporting and Reportable Conduct obligations, and that new employees are provided with relevant information through:

5.4.8.1 Mandatory Reporting and Child Protection Training;

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5.4.8.2 Northside Policies;

5.4.8.3 Northside's *Our Approach to Early Childhood Education* Document;

5.4.8.4 Northside's *Working with Young Children* Document; and

5.4.8.5 Northside's *Commitment to Child Safety* Document

5.4.9 Northside will develop and comply with vigorous processes that ensure the integrity of Northside employees working with young children in a Northside Early Childhood Centre, including:

5.4.9.1 Pre-screening processes;

5.4.9.2 Reference checks;

5.4.9.3 A current Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) registration; and

5.4.9.4 Comprehensive educator inductions

5.4.10 Northside will ensure that all grievances and complaints are addressed, investigated fairly, and documented in a timely manner and that the Australian Children's Education and Care Authority (ACECQA) is notified of any relevant changes to the operation of a Northside Early Childhood Centre, serious incidents, and any complaints which allege a breach of legislation. For more information, please refer to **Grievance Policy**.

5.4.11 Northside will support Nominated Supervisors to provide strong pedagogical and operational leadership which ensures compliance with the *National Quality Framework* through:

5.4.11.1 Monthly Supervision with a clinical psychologist;

5.4.11.2 Educational Leader Meetings;

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- 5.4.11.3 Nominated Supervisor Meetings; and
- 5.4.11.4 Regular professional development conversations.
- 5.4.12 All new educators, including casual educators, volunteer staff, and students on placement, are provided with a comprehensive induction of the Early Childhood Centre/Centres in which they are commencing, and Northside's **Induction Checklist** is completed in full prior to the educator commencing work in the Centre. For more information, please see the **Educator Induction Procedure**.
- 5.4.13 All educators will undergo a yearly induction re-fresher training with the Nominated Supervisor.
- 5.4.14 The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that all educators understand their roles and responsibilities, have read and signed the required policies, and have an opportunity to ask questions before the commencement of their first shift. For more information, please see the **Educator Induction Procedure**.
- 5.4.15 The Nominated Supervisor will ensure educators receive regular training in matters that concern them and are relevant to their role, including but not limited to mandatory reporting, emergency equipment use (fire extinguishers & blankets), and first aid.
- 5.4.16 The Nominated Supervisor will regularly evaluate educator's performance and ensure that performance and development conversations take place with each educator annually. These conversations are to be documented on a **Performance and Development Conversation Record**, to be stored in the educator's staff file and sent to Northside's Human Resources (HR) Team.
- 5.4.17 The Nominated Supervisor will develop and regularly review a Statement of Philosophy for their Centre which guides every aspect of the Centre's operations.

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- 5.4.18 The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that families are communicated with regarding their child's enrolment, development, and learning.

5.5 Educational Program and Practice

- 5.5.1 The *Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)* will be used by educators in all Northside Early Childhood Centres to foster children's creativity and curiosity through play-based intentional teaching and spontaneous teachable moments.
- 5.5.2 The Nominated Supervisor will lead the development and implementation of the educational program and support educators to effectively implement a cycle of planning to enhance programs and practices.
- 5.5.3 The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that the *EYLF* underpins the development of educational programs for children that support and strengthen children's sense of identity, connections and contributions to their world, sense of wellbeing, involvement in learning, and communication skills.
- 5.5.4 Educators will analyse children's learning and development and their progression towards the Learning Outcomes of the *EYLF* as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysis, documentation, planning, implementation, and reflection.
- 5.5.5 The Nominated Supervisor will ensure the completion of regular Learning Summaries for each child.
- 5.5.6 The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that opportunities are provided for educators to engage with and participate in professional development and research.
- 5.5.7 Educators will ensure that critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.

5.6 Record Keeping

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- 5.6.1 Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, approved providers must:
- 5.6.1.1 Keep and maintain certain records, including but not limited to enrolment and attendance records;
 - 5.6.1.2 Ensure confidentiality and secure storage of records; and
 - 5.6.1.3 Have records available for inspection by an authorised officer from the Regulatory Authority, and, in some cases, families of enrolled children.
- 5.6.2 Nominated Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the documents required to be kept under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* are kept and stored for the required timeframe.
- 5.6.3 Nominated Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that any documents and records kept at the service are stored securely to uphold confidentiality and privacy of children, families, and educators.
- 5.6.4 Information on where to access the *Law and Regulations* is to be available in each Northside Early Childhood Centre.
- 5.6.5 Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, a staff record must be maintained for all staff, volunteers, and students. Documentation kept must include, but is not limited to, personal details (full name, date of birth, and address), evidence of relevant qualifications and approved training, and a copy of the staff member's WWVP registration.
- 5.6.6 For information on what documents are required to be kept, and timeframes that these documents are required to be kept for, please see [Record Keeping](#) and the **Archiving Procedure**.

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5.7. Students at Northside Early Childhood Centres

- 5.7.1. Northside will accept students on placement as part of our obligation to the wider early education sector. Students are required to provide Northside with relevant documents for record keeping.
- 5.7.2. Students are expected to follow Northside's policies and procedures to ensure their practices align with Northside's values.
- 5.7.3. All students are required to complete Northsides' induction prior to the commencement of placement.
- 5.7.4. All students, upon induction, are required to be informed of each child's **Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan** and any associated **Medical Management Plans**.
- 5.7.5. All students, upon induction, are to be informed about the **Medical Conditions Policy**.
- 5.7.6. For more information, please refer to **section 5.9** of the **Early Childhood Authorisations Procedure**.

6. Breaches and Penalties

6.1 Breaches

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

6.2 Penalties

- 6.2.1 If Northside believes that unethical or illegal activities inconsistent with Northside's 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.

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6.2.1.3 Where a breach involves illegal activities, Northside has an obligation to report these to 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 The Approved Provider (Northside) is responsible for:

- 8.1.1.1 Ensuring that the name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints may be addressed is clearly visible at the service;
- 8.1.1.2 Ensuring that the Centre Director is formally appointed as the Nominated Supervisor, as per the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, and has consented to this in writing;
- 8.1.1.3 Ensuring that all Northside Early Childhood Centres will meet or exceed the staffing arrangements as required in the National Quality Framework;

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- 8.1.1.4 Ensuring that effective self-assessment and quality improvement processes are in place, including regular compliance and quality audits and policy reviews; and
- 8.1.1.5 Ensuring that effective risk management systems are in place at all levels of the organisation, including vigorous processes for ensuring the integrity of all Northside employees working with children.
- 8.1.1.6 Ensuring policies and procedures are subject to regular review.

8.1.2 Nominated Supervisors are responsible for:

- 8.1.2.1 Ensuring that any complaints received that meet the threshold outlined in section 5.1 are reported to the Regulatory Authority in writing, within 24 hours;
- 8.1.2.2 Ensuring that complaints are managed in accordance with the **Complaints & Appeals Procedure**;
- 8.1.2.3 Ensuring that educator to child ratios are maintained at all times, in accordance with the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*;
- 8.1.2.4 Ensuring that a Responsible Person on Duty is determined whenever the Nominated Supervisor is not on the premises, and that the Responsible Person has consented to this in writing;
- 8.1.2.5 Ensuring all new educators, including casual educators, volunteer staff, and students on placement, are provided with a comprehensive induction of the Early Childhood Centre and have had an opportunity to read required policies and ask questions;
- 8.1.2.6 Developing and regularly reviewing a Statement of Philosophy for the Centre;

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- 8.1.2.7 Regularly reviewing educator's performance through annual Performance and Development Conversations;
- 8.1.2.8 Leading the development and implementation of an educational program that is underpinned by the EYLF; and
- 8.1.2.9 Ensuring that opportunities are provided for educators to engage with and participate in professional development and research.
- 8.1.2.10 Ensuring employees and educators follow policies and procedures.
- 8.1.2.11 Ensuring employees, educators and families are notified of any change to policies and procedures.
- 8.1.2.12 Ensuring policies and procedures are keep available and accessible.

8.1.3 Educators are responsible for:

- 8.1.3.1 Signing in and out using the Educator Logs whenever entering or exiting the classroom;
- 8.1.3.2 Notifying the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person on Duty any incident, complaint, or event that may require a notification to Regulatory Authority as soon as possible;
- 8.1.3.3 Completing regular Learning Summaries for each child;
- 8.1.3.4 Analysing children's learning and development and their progression towards the Learning Outcomes of the EYLF;
- 8.1.3.5 Communicating with families about their child's learning and development; and

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8.1.3.6 Engaging in critical reflection of children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups.

8.1.3.7 Following policies and procedures.

9. Associated Documents

9.1 Associated Northside Documents

- 9.1.1 Grievance Policy
- 9.1.2 Risk Management Policy
- 9.1.3 Responsible Person Consent Form
- 9.1.4 Educator Logs
- 9.1.5 Risk Register
- 9.1.6 Risk Management Plan
- 9.1.7 Our Approach to Early Childhood Education Document
- 9.1.8 Working with Young Children Document
- 9.1.9 Performance and Development Conversation Record
- 9.1.10 Educator Induction Procedure
- 9.1.11 Archiving Procedure

9.2. Additional Associated Documents

- 9.2.1. [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- 9.2.2. [ACECQA Information Sheet: Nominated Supervisor](#)

10. Definitions


- 10.1 **Northside-** Northside Community Service, including all programs operated by the organisation.
- 10.2 **Employee-** 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.

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- 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 Centre.
- 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.
- 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.

11. Document Control and Version History

11.1 Document Control

Document Reference:	Early Childhood Governance Policy
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Signature of Approval Authority:	
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11.2 Version History

Revision Date	Version No.	Brief reason for change	Reference Sections

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