



Providing a Child Safe Environment

Review Date: 29/04/2027

Policy Statement

Evans Head Preschool Association is committed to ensuring that the safety, rights and best interests of children are the paramount consideration in all decisions and actions. This duty applies to governance, leadership, staffing, supervision, environments, risk management and daily practice, in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law (NSW), the Children's Guardian Act 2019 and the NSW Child Safe Scheme. We will provide training, resource, information and guidance to support this in order to:

- ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the preschool is protected at all times;
- ensure that people educating and caring for children at our preschools act in the best interests of the child;
- protect and advocate for the rights of all children to feel safe, and be safe, at all times;
- maintain a culture in which children's rights are respected;
- encourage active participation of families preschool, supporting a partnership approach and shared

Goals – What are we going to do?

All children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment where the safety, rights and best interests of children are the paramount consideration. This includes the right to:

- have their rights, safety and wellbeing prioritised above all other considerations
- express their views and wishes about matters affecting their lives and to have those views taken seriously;
- feel and be safe in their interactions with adults and other children;
- understand, as early as possible, what it means to feel and be safe.

Strategies / How will it be done?

The Physical Environment

In order to promote a safe physical environment, we will:

- Ensure all equipment and materials meet Australian safety standards.
- Conduct daily checks of indoor and outdoor environments.
- Remove, repair or replace unsafe or damaged equipment promptly.
- Maintain equipment maintenance schedules.
- Design environments that support effective supervision and visibility.
- Ensure learning environments are established that provide appropriate child groupings, sufficient space, and include carefully chosen and well-maintained resources and equipment.

Strategies / How will it be done? (cont)

- › Organise indoor and outdoor spaces to ensure risks to the health and safety are minimised.
- › Conduct risk assessments of the service environment to determine any risks to children's health and safety.
- › Analyse and evaluate the risks associated with identified hazards.
- › Determine appropriate ways to eliminate or control identified hazards.
- › Review risk assessments after any serious incident report is made to the Regulatory Authority.
- › Ensure smoking & vaping is banned within 10 meters of the grounds of, and within the legislated distance for our state/territory of any entrance of an enclosed public space.
- › Ensure secure storage of hazardous products including chemicals and medications.

Staffing and Supervision

- › Ensure that sufficient numbers of educators are employed to ensure adequate supervision of children at all times.
- › Manage rosters to prioritise children's safety and wellbeing.
- › Apply child-safe recruitment, screening and suitability practices.
- › Provide ongoing training and supervision on topics related to child protection, child safety, responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse, and paramountcy principles

Child Protection

- › Ensure that all staff including educators, students and volunteers have current working with children checks as required by NSW legislation.
- › Ensure that all staff are given information and/or training about child protection law and any obligations they have under that law.
- › Refer to the *Child Protection Policy*.
- › All educators and volunteers of our service are required to familiarise themselves with NSW child protection legislation and take appropriate measures according to state/territory specific protocols if they have reasonable grounds to suspect a child or young person is at risk of significant harm and have current concern about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person.
- › The service is committed to preventing inappropriate conduct. Measures to prevent are implemented, monitored and maintained 21
- › Staff will undertake training in order to effectively:
 - Respond to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse
 - against staff members of the service;

- understand the responsibilities and processes as a mandatory reporter (or equivalent);
- be able to recognise the factors that increase a child’s vulnerability to maltreatment;
- be aware of the vulnerabilities which may indicate a need to assess, monitor or curtail the behaviour of individuals in relation to children and young people within organisations; and
- staff will implement procedures for releasing children only into the care of authorised persons.

Preventing other harms and hazards

The service will ensure that:

- ▶ Risk assessments are conducted regularly for excursions and transportation provided or arranged by the service in conjunction with the service’s [Excursions and Transportation of Children](#) policy.
- ▶ Risk minimisation practices are in place for the management of medical conditions in conjunction with the service’s [Dealing with Medical Conditions](#) policy.
- ▶ Emergency evacuation plans specific each preschool venue are implemented in conjunction with the service’s *Emergency and Evacuation policy* ([Evans Head](#) or [Woodburn](#)) .
- ▶ Hot drinks are made and consumed away from children.
- ▶ If a staff member works alone, careful consideration has been given to the ability of that individual to meet regulatory and child protection requirements.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations with regard to the delivery and collection of children at all times. ▶ Ensure all staff have access to relevant professional development. ▶ Ensure that the Nominated Supervisor and staff members at the service who work with children are advised of current child protection legislation, its application, and any obligations that they may have under that law (Regulation 84). ▶ Commit to implementing the Child Safe Standards. ▶ Ensure that the safety, rights and best interests of children are treated as the paramount consideration in all decisions and actions.
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cooperate with other services and/or professionals in the best interests of children and their families. ▶ Ensure that families are made aware of support services available to them and of the assistance these services can provide. ▶ Ensure that all staff who work with children are supported to implement this policy in the service.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Protect the rights of children and families and encourage their participation in decision-making at the service. ▶ Implement National Principles for child safe organisations and NSW specific child safe scheme and child safe standards.
Early Childhood Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Act in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy. ▶ Raise concerns when barriers or threats to the protection of children and young people's safety and wellbeing are identified, including through the conduct of other adults at the site/service. ▶ Keeping up to date and complying with any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy. ▶ Following all record keeping requirements. ▶ Undertaking appropriate training and education on child protection. ▶ Identifying any potential for risk and harm to a child at the service and developing and implementing effective prevention strategies in consultation with the approved provider and the nominated supervisor. ▶ Co-operating with other services and/or professionals in the best interests of children and their families. ▶ Informing families of support services available to them, and of the assistance these services can provide. ▶ Ensuring that no child is left alone (or is out of sight) with a contractor, visitor, volunteer, student or parent/guardian at the service. ▶ Implementing the procedures for reporting suspected child abuse. ▶ Notifying the nominated supervisor or the approved provider immediately on becoming aware of any concerns, complaints or allegations regarding the health, safety and welfare of a child at the service.
Early Childhood Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offering support to the child and their family, and to other and staff in response to concerns or reports relating to the health, safety and wellbeing of a child at the service. ▶ Maintaining confidentiality at all times. ▶ Adhering to all service policies.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reading and complying with this policy. ▶ Reporting any concerns, including in relation to potential for child abuse, to the Nominated Supervisor.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the preschool will review this Policy every 2 years. Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the preschool are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the preschool; a family's ability to utilise the preschool; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Related Legislation

- ▶ Education and Care Services National Law; Sections 162A, 165, 166, 167
- ▶ Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulation 82, 83, 84, 99, 103, 115, 122, 123, 158-159, 165 168(2h), 175, 176
- ▶ Australian Child Protection Legislation aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/australian-child-protection-legislation
- ▶ [Children’s Guardian Amendment \(Child Safe Scheme\) Bill 2021](#)
- ▶ Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act) – <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/the-privacy-act>
- ▶ Privacy Legislation Amendment ([Enhancing Online Privacy and other measures](#)) Bill 2021
- ▶ Australian Privacy Principles – <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/australian-privacy-principles>
- ▶ Guide to Child Safe Standards - <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/resources/guide-child-safe-standards>

Appendices

NSW Government, Office of the Children’s Guardian
https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-01/B_CSS_ChildSafeStandardsBrochure.pdf

Responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse flow chart
[Responding to incidents, disclosures an suspicions of child abuse flow chart](#)

Appendix A – Paramount Consideration in Everyday Practice

The safety, rights and best interests of children must be the paramount consideration for all individuals involved in the operation and delivery of ECEC. This includes every person working in ECEC in NSW, including approved providers, service leaders, nominated supervisors, educators and the NSW Early Learning Commission itself.

Under Section 3A, the rights and best interests of the child must prevail over any other obligation or interest. This includes the financial interests of approved providers and any other fiduciary duties owed by persons with management or control of services, and extends to duties or obligations which arise from the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth). This has been law since October 2025

President’s Name: Ashleigh Mitchell

President’s Signature:

Date:20...../.....05...../...2026.....

REVIEW DATE:
 20/05/2028.....

Policy Dated	Adopted by	Review Date
13/09/2022	Kieran O’Reilly	13/09/2024
29/04/2025	Ashleigh Mitchell	29/04/2027
22/05/2026	Ashleigh Mitchell	20/05/2028

Sources / Useful Resources

- ▶ Office of the Australian Information Commissioner – <https://www.oaic.gov.au/>
- ▶ Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/>
- ▶ [ACECQA’s Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- ▶ Australian Institute of Family Studies: Pre-employment screening: Working With Children Checks and Police Checks - <https://aifs.gov.au/resources/resource-sheets/pre-employment-screening-working-children-checks-and-police-checks>
- ▶ Childsafety Australia – <http://www.childsafetyaustralia.com.au/>
- ▶ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – www.unicef.org.au
- ▶ The Supporting young children’s rights: Statement of intent (2015-2018) <https://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Supporting-young-childrens-rights-statement-of-intent-2015-2018.pdf>
- ▶ Australian Human Rights Commission – www.humanrights.gov.au
- ▶ Australian Childhood Foundation – www.childhood.org.au
- ▶ Online-privacy-bill-explanatory-paper.pdf ([ag.gov.au](http://www.ag.gov.au))
- ▶ Guild to Child Safe Standards - <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/resources/guide-child-safe-standards>

Related guidelines, standards, frameworks

- ▶ National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety – Standard 2.2
- ▶ National Quality Standard, Quality Area 3: Physical Environment – Standard 3.1, 3.2
- ▶ National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership – Standard 7.1, 7.2
- ▶ Child Safe Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.