

# Child Safe Environment - Supervision Policy

## Background

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for providing a child safe environment to minimise risk of harm and hazard to children attending education and care services.

## Purpose

At Peak Sports and Learning, we recognise that effective supervision is a fundamental aspect of providing quality care for children. Our approach to supervision goes beyond mere observation; it involves active engagement and responsiveness to the needs of individual children or groups, ensuring their safety and well-being. We understand that high levels of supervision are crucial in safeguarding children from potential hazards and harm that might occur during play, physical activity, and daily routines. Adhering strictly to staff ratios, our educators are highly attuned to the diverse needs of all children in our service, guaranteeing the highest standard of safety and well-being. This vigilant supervision not only protects but also enables our educators to engage in meaningful interactions, enhancing the children's learning and developmental experiences. We are committed to always complying with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, ensuring our practices meet the highest standards of legal and professional requirements. Our policy objectives are thus centered on maintaining a vigilant, responsive, and engaging supervision environment, ensuring every child at Peak Sports and Learning receives the attention and care they need for a safe and enriching experience.

## Considerations & Legislative requirements

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard/s	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
Law Sections: 165, 166, 167 Regulations: 82, 83, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 115, 122, 123, 155, 165, 166, 168, 170, 171, 172, 175(d)(e)	Standard 2.2 Element 2.2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Excursion Policy</li> <li>- Child Safe Environment - Child Protection Policy</li> <li>- Safe Arrivals of Children Policy</li> <li>- Safe Transportation of Children Policy</li> <li>- Medical Conditions Policy</li> <li>- Interactions with Children Policy</li> <li>- Staffing policy</li> <li>- <b>Centre Risk Assessment Folder</b></li> <li>- <b>Excursion Risk Assessments</b></li> <li>- <b>Active Supervision Maps</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- My Time, Our Place</li> <li>- Service Philosophy</li> <li>- Daily Hazards checklist</li> <li>- Risk assessments</li> <li>- Child Safe Standards</li> </ul>

## Principles

Our service is committed to:

- Comply with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations at all times.
- Maintain a Child Safe Environment by taking reasonable precautions and ensuring adequate supervision to protect children from harm and hazard.
- Consider the design and arrangement of children's environments to support active supervision.
- Where the program involves simultaneous use of indoor and outdoor environments, educators will effectively supervise children in both environments.
- Use supervision skills to reduce or prevent injury or incidents to children and adults.

- Guide educators in decision-making about when to interrupt and redirect children’s play.
- Support educators and their supervision strategies.
- Acknowledge and understand when supervision is required for high-risk experiences and/or when the adult-to-child ratio is increased.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Approved Provider

- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure implementation of the 'Providing a child safe environment - Supervision' policy and procedures, complete appropriate risk assessments, and take actions to minimise risks to children’s health and safety.
- Provide an environment free from tobacco, illicit drugs, and alcohol, ensuring that educators or staff are not impaired in their ability to supervise or care for children.
- Promote a culture of child safety and wellbeing that underpins all service operations, reducing risk to children, including abuse.
- Ensure policies and procedures promote equity and respect diversity for children and young people’s safety and wellbeing.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, and staff follow the 'Providing a child safe environment - Supervision' policy and procedures.
- Ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are accessible to supervisors, coordinators, educators, staff, and are available for inspection.

### Nominated Supervisor / Responsible Person

- Implement the 'Providing a child safe environment - Supervision' policy and procedures.
- Meet staff-to-child ratios to ensure adequate supervision.
- Ensure all educators and staff know where to access the 'Providing a child safe environment - Supervision' policy and procedures.
- Provide an environment free from tobacco, illicit drugs, and alcohol.
- Maintain ongoing communication with educators and staff about their responsibilities and any changes to policies, procedures, and legislation.
- Support educators and staff in upholding the service’s culture of child safety and wellbeing.
- Ensure children's safety and wellbeing by following supervision principles and creating supportive resources and training for educators, such as active supervision maps and safety briefings with clear expectations of roles and responsibilities.

### Educators

- Implement the 'Providing a child safe environment - Supervision' policy and procedures and follow risk assessments.
- Uphold the service’s culture of child safety and wellbeing.
- Provide an environment free from tobacco, illicit drugs, and alcohol.
- Understand individual needs and action plans for children in your care.
- Monitor and maintain staff-to-child ratios to ensure adequate supervision.
- Recognise and respond effectively to children and young people, considering diverse needs.
- Involve children and young people in decision-making affecting them, especially in safety issues and risk identification.

## Procedures

Active supervision combines listening to and watching children play, being aware of the environment and its potential risks, the equipment used by children, weather conditions, time of day, managing small and large groups of children, transitions, and many other factors.

It is crucial for educators to be aware of the different ages, personalities, behaviours, needs, abilities, and characteristics of the children in their care. Understanding how children interact, communicate, and play with one another depends on the educators building relationships with them. This helps educators learn about who children are, how they react in certain situations, and discover their interests. Developing these skills assists educators in predicting children's play patterns, which affects how they plan and establish environments and coordinate supervision strategies to maximise children's safety and ability to play free from harm or injury.

Peak uses the following Principles for Active Supervision (PLEA):

- Plan the Environment
- Look & Listen
- Empower
- Actively Engage

### 1. Active Supervision Principle - Plan the Environment

#### 1.1 Staffing:

- Adhere to the prescribed ratio of 1 educator for every 15 children as mandated by the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations.
- Conduct risk assessments for excursions to determine staffing ratios. Consider factors such as venue, proximity to water bodies, transportation, staff qualifications, access to first aid, children attending, public presence, and weather conditions.
- Within the center, ratios will consider educators' skills and experience, and the types of activities children are involved in. Supervision will vary depending on the activities and risk level. The Supervisor and educators will be aware of activities that are of higher risk and will constantly discuss and move to where high risk activities are taking place. For example, outdoor play vs. indoor craft, could mean that there is a 1:10 ratio outdoors and a 1:20 at the craft activity. However, the overall ratio remains at 1:15 across the service.
- Where possible, and when Inclusion Support funding is available, Peak provides additional educators above recommended ratios to provide support for children across the service. These educators are also included on the roster. The additional educators can be used to provide additional supervision across the centre.

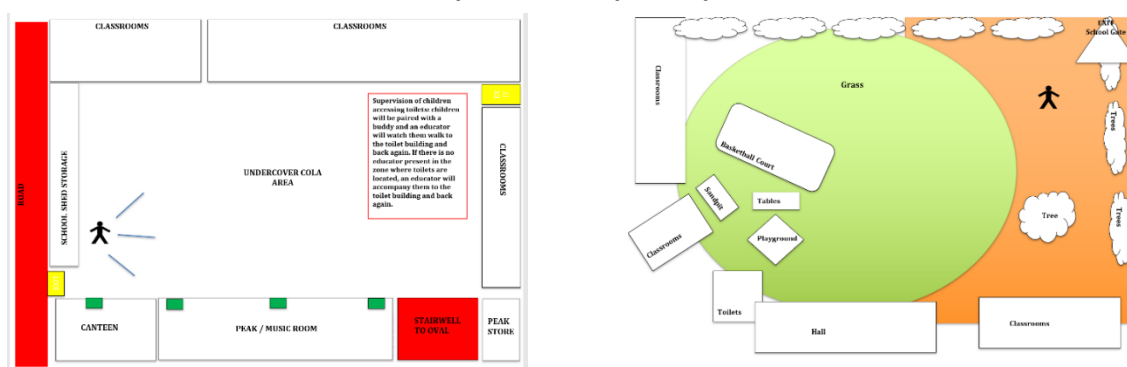
#### 1.2 Risk Assessments:

- The service maintains a Centre Risk Assessment Folder containing assessments for Indoor, Outdoor Environments, and General/Neighbourhood areas, outlining control/prevention strategies, responsible parties, and frequency of implementation.
- The service maintains a Child Safe Risk Management Plans addressing potential harms in a childcare setting, including the online environment and strategies to minimise these risks.
- Daily hazard checks are undertaken to ensure the area in which we operate from is safe and secure for children and staff. Checks are completed daily to ensure all areas are clean, tidy and that no potential risks or hazards have arisen.
- Equipment and facilities are well maintained and looked after ensuring safe use and safe practice.
- Educators will ensure children understand not to access unsupervised areas and that hazardous items are kept out of children's reach as per service safety procedures.

### 1.3 Active Supervision Maps:

- Active Supervision Maps of the service helps educators to better supervise children when they are accessing various locations such as indoor, outdoor, sporting fields, toilets etc.
- The service will ensure a map is on display that shows educators guidance of the areas they are responsible for supervising. A marker within each zone on the map will demonstrate the most effective vantage point for effective supervision. This will be a location that allows for the educator to see and hear the children accessing that zone as a guide only. Educators will move throughout the zone freely and not remain fixed unless the level of supervision requires them to be.
- Each zone may have different duties required of the educators supervising them. Supervisors will communicate this to educators and consider the number of children who may access each zone, the activities that will be happening, possible risk factors and hazards and visibility. For example, it would be unreasonable to expect a sole educator supervising a school oval with 15 children on it to also be responsible for children as they walk between the oval and the indoor facility unless there is a clear view of their walking path. If the path is obstructed, it may be necessary to have a staff member positioned somewhere between the two locations.

#### Active Supervision Map Example



### 1.4 Attendance Roll Information

- Access to the daily attendance roll will include relevant medical conditions of children such as allergies, anaphylaxis, asthma, and diabetes. Educators should be familiar with the location of medication and first aid supplies and follow procedures as per the service's Medical Conditions Policy.
- 'All About Me' profiles, provide educators with deeper insights into individual children, especially those requiring additional supervision. These profiles are valuable for understanding and guiding the behaviour of children, such as those with a tendency to wander off.
- Regular head counts will be conducted during service hours.

### 1.5 Team Briefing – Communication and Teamwork

Team briefing is a necessity for effective teamwork and communication in providing a safe and well-supervised environment for children. The Responsible Person will conduct daily briefings with Educators to clarify roles and responsibilities including:

- Emphasis on ACTIVE SUPERVISION and the utilisation of supervision documentation.
- Educators must communicate and collaborate to ensure effective supervision of children. This involves being aware of each other's locations within the service and understanding how this impacts child supervision.
- Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities is essential. Educators are encouraged to inform their colleagues if they need to leave their area for any reason, such as retrieving resources or using the bathroom.
- Communication about individual children's needs is crucial. Educators may need to share specific details, like a child who requires monitoring following concerns of an asthma flare-up.

## **2. Active Supervision Principle - Look and Listen**

To effectively implement the 'Look and Listen' principles of active supervision, our educators will employ a range of strategies that encompass both vigilant observation and attentive listening. Educators will ensure that they:

- Position themselves strategically to observe and hear all children, ensuring visibility and auditory range during activities.
- Engage proactively with children, joining in their activities to enhance safety and interaction.
- Continuously scan for potential safety hazards and understand specific risks in the environment.
- Account for all children at all times, ensuring no one is unattended.
- Listen attentively to the sounds of children's laughter, conversations, arguments, and screams to assess situations and respond effectively.
- Be alert to unusual sounds or the absence of normal noise, which could indicate a problem.
- Use both visual and auditory observations to gauge the group's mood and dynamics.
- Educators will actively move around, circling the area to ensure better coverage and readiness to respond promptly in emergencies. This active movement is key to maintaining a comprehensive view and staying prepared for any situation.
- Respond swiftly to changes in the environment or children's behaviour, intervening when necessary.
- Maintain open communication with colleagues, sharing observations and collaborating for comprehensive supervision.

## **3. Active Supervision Principle - Empower**

To effectively implement the 'Empower' principles of active supervision, our educators employ a range of strategies that focus on enabling children to understand and participate in maintaining their own safety. These strategies include:

- Teaching children the proper and safe use of equipment and guiding them to identify safe and unsafe practices.
- Providing clear instructions and setting expectations to foster a sense of responsibility in children.
- All children at Peak are taught and regularly reminded of the catch phrase, "If we can't see you, we can't save you".
- Involving children in all aspects of the service's daily operations, including the development of rules and boundaries. This involvement helps children understand the reasons for limits and the consequences of not adhering to them.
- Assessing each play scenario based on the developmental needs of children, as the age range in our service varies greatly. This may require more active supervision for younger children or for activities that pose a greater risk.
- Respecting the privacy rights of all children, especially older age groups, and developing supervision strategies that allow them to self-manage their play and limits, while still being monitored.
- Adding to and enriching children's play through educators' supervision levels, intervening only when necessary for hazard and risk identification.
- Engaging in play with children and interacting with them in alignment with our service's values and beliefs. This approach not only supervises but also builds meaningful relationships and minimises challenging behaviours.
- The service has intentional teaching programs available. For example, educating children about 'Protective Behaviours'. This includes teaching children about their rights, learning skills to keep themselves safe and helps them understand what they can do, or who they should speak to when they do not feel safe.

Through these strategies, educators at Peak Sports and Learning ensure that children are empowered in their environment, fostering a safe, engaging, and nurturing space for all.

#### **4. Active Supervision Principle - Actively Engage**

Our educators are dedicated to the principle of 'Actively Engage' in Active Supervision, which ensures deep involvement in children's activities and learning. The approach includes:

- Balancing careful observation with direct engagement in children's activities.
- Gaining insights into each child's unique skills, abilities, and interests to enhance learning opportunities.
- Adapting activities and interactions based on observations and engagement with children, ensuring the learning environment aligns with their current interests and needs.
- Facilitating opportunities for children to lead activities, which allows educators to support their choices and foster independence and decision-making skills.
- Being actively involved in the midst of action, enabling better assessment of situations and timely interventions.
- Encouraging and supporting positive interactions among children to aid in the development of social skills and the building of friendships.
- Building stronger relationships with children, leading to safer and more supportive interactions.
- Demonstrating positive behaviours', guiding social skills, and facilitating problem-solving, all of which contribute to enriching the overall experience of children in our care.

This structured approach ensures that active engagement is not just about observation but is also about meaningful participation in the children's learning and development journey.

#### **5. Bathroom Use**

- Children will be encouraged to manage their own bathroom needs, promoting autonomy.
- Educators will respect the privacy of children and teach them about personal boundaries through ongoing program and education.
- Educators will teach and remind children about proper handwashing techniques.
- Educators should consider the location of children's toilets and ensure children are in line of sight when walking to and returning from the bathrooms.
- Where the bathrooms are out of sight of the supervision area, an Educator should escort children to the toilet building and back again, remaining outside the bathroom area.
- Children will be reminded in safety briefs that when using the bathroom to ensure appropriate behaviour standards are followed. The bathroom space should only be used for the intention of going to the toilet and washing hands. Time should be limited in this space and children are encouraged to let an Educator know if peers are mis-using this space.
- Educators will maintain communication and be aware of the frequency and duration of bathroom visits to observe any unusual patterns.
- When the toilets are not in use, Educators will inspect the space for cleanliness and hygiene.

#### **6. Supervision adaptations during temporary relocation**

The service acknowledges that relocating to an alternative location on the school grounds may increase everyday risks. We aim to work collaboratively with the school to minimise relocations, considering the impact on families, educators, and children. However, when relocation is necessary, the service will ensure:

- Regular hazard checks will be conducted, with a focus on identifying and mitigating surrounding hazards.
- Mandatory documents, if not accessible on request, will be transferred or duplicated for the alternative location.
- The alternative location will have suitable bathroom access, with careful planning of supervision strategies. Where necessary, additional measures such as a buddy system and educators escorting children, will be included in the safety brief.
- Educator briefings will address changes in supervision zones and any necessary adjustments to active supervision strategies.

- Emergency and evacuation procedures will be reviewed and adapted to the new location, considering site positioning and evacuation routes.

## **7. Supervision adaptations during Excursions**

In addition to our on-site supervision procedures, Peak Sports and Learning has established specific guidelines for excursions to ensure children's safety and well-being. The excursion policy sets out all requirements. In relation to supervision on an excursion:

- Child-to-educator ratios for excursions will be determined based on a comprehensive risk assessment for each specific outing. These ratios, as specified in the risk assessment, will be strictly adhered to at all times.
- Risk Assessment forms will be completed prior to any excursions or in-service activities deemed potentially risky. These assessments will be made available to families for all excursions and activities.
- Recognise that outdoor environments and excursions present unique hazards. Educators will be vigilant in identifying potential risks when children are outside the service environment.
- Educators will ensure children are supervised consistently while under the care of the service but outside of the service grounds.
- All activities and play undertaken during these times will be appropriate for the environment and as free from potential hazards as feasible.
- Educators will be thoroughly familiar with the procedures for locating a missing child, ensuring a prompt and efficient response in case of such an incident.
- When using public bathroom facilities, children will be accompanied by educators walking to and from facilities.
- Where the bathrooms have been checked by an Educator and there are no members of the public present, Educators will avoid entering bathrooms with children where possible.
- Where members of the public are present in the bathroom facilities, an Educator will remain present in the bathroom area but will refrain from entering any cubicles. The Educator will remain in a position of best visibility near the entry/exit ensuring they can see children entering and exiting cubicles.
- Where a child needs assistance in an individual cubicle, e.g. soiling, two Educators will be present to ensure child safety.
- Regular head counts and roll calls will be conducted throughout the excursion to maintain constant awareness of all children's whereabouts.

## **8. Supervision adaptations during transport**

In addition to our on-site supervision procedures, Peak Sports and Learning has established specific guidelines for safe transportation to ensure children's safety and well-being. The safe transportation of children policy sets out all requirements. In relation to supervision on transport:

- Child-to-educator ratios for transportation will be determined based on a comprehensive risk assessment for each transport scenario. These ratios, as outlined in the risk assessment, will be strictly adhered to at all times to ensure optimal safety.
- Educators supervising children on the bus must remain seated with a seatbelt fastened. They should be strategically positioned throughout the bus to ensure optimal shared supervision with other colleagues. This arrangement prevents clustering of educators and promotes effective supervision across the entire bus.
- Ensuring children safely transition to and from transport to the care environment is crucial. This includes guiding and monitoring children as they board and disembark the vehicle and conducting headcounts at each transition.
- A mandatory check is conducted every time the vehicle is used to ensure that no child is inadvertently left behind.

## 9. External Agencies

Occasionally, external agencies such as tutors, occupational therapists, and case workers are invited by the family to work with children in our setting at Peak. Children are not left unattended with visiting professionals. They are to remain within a supervised area occupied with Peak Educators.

Where the external agent is required to remove the child from the Peak setting or supervised area, this will only be done when the family authorizes for that individual, via the child's Fullybooked enrolment, as an authorised person to sign out or collect the child from the service.

All visiting agencies are required to sign into the visitor's book upon arrival and departure, detailing their full name and signature, along with the time of their visit. This process ensures a secure and consistently monitored child safe environment for all children.

## 10. Missing child procedure

Active supervision strategies are used as a preventative measure to ensure that children remain under adequate supervision at all times. If a child is known to make attempts to leave the service, educators will work with the Nominated Supervisor and the family to develop strategies to protect the child and to prevent the child from absconding. In some cases, these strategies may be documented in an Individual Behaviour Support Plan.

In the event that it is identified that a child is missing from the supervised area the following procedure will be initiated immediately:

- Assembly/Roll check: All children are to be moved to a designated assembly area and seated. Recheck head counts with a formal roll call. Staff member to remain with all assembled children at all times and should provide them with a suitable game or activity. The activity should not include moving around, children are to remain seated.
- Identify who the child is, and the last time child was accounted for and where.
- Gather further information such as if there are any children that were playing with the unaccounted child that may know information or have seen what they did or went, check any court orders relevant to that child and/or risk of unauthorised pick up?
- Search priority - Responsible person to divide areas of premises as per map on evacuation plan. Divide areas and delegate to individuals. Indoor including closed rooms and restrooms. Outdoor including external restrooms or any unlocked buildings/rooms. Ensure all accessible areas are included in the search.
- Search guidance - Enter area of search delegated; first scan all areas of visibility and identify areas where view is obstructed. If a large area, divide into sections, and clear each section methodically from one end to another. Division of a room or area should be based on the number and type of objects and not necessarily the size of the area. Ensure any items on the floor such as blankets, cushions are lifted and checked under. Ensure any doors are opened and cleared in your search, e.g. cupboards, storerooms. Where possible, close off areas that have been searched. Once you are confident the area is searched report straight back to the Responsible Person to clear the area.
- Where child remains unaccounted for after initial search - A second search of the same areas should be completed by different individuals to the first search. Emergency contacts to be contacted to ensure child has not been removed by authorised pick up and to notify that a search is underway. Call the police for assistance and Directors. Commence, where practical, a search outside the premises boundaries.
- Notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours.



## Version Control Table

Version Control	Date Released	Next Review	Approved by	Amendment
1	September 2018	September 2019	Directors	Nil – This is the first version
2	October 2019	October 2020	Directors	Changes to clarify supervision during transportation.
3	March 2020	June 2020	Directors	Reviewed with no amendments. Moved to new document review timeline.
4	June 2020	June 2021	Directors	Reviewed with no amendments.
5	June 2021	June 2023	Directors	Small amendments to Risk Assessment procedure
6	November 2023	November 2024	Directors	Active supervision principles changed to peak specific PLEA, information added to support clear supervision guidance around bathrooms, excursions and transport.