

Providing a Child Safe Environment Preschool



Introduction	<p>All children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that promotes the opportunity to thrive and are supported by adults who safeguard and advocate for their health, safety, security and wellbeing. This includes the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be asked to express their views and wishes about matters affecting their lives and to have those views appropriately considered by adults, • Feel safe in their interactions with adults, other children and young people, • Understand what is meant by 'feeling and being safe'.
Outcome Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
Eligibility	<p>This Policy applies to all staff employed by Learning Links. The term staff also applies to students, interns, and volunteers. This policy also applies to workers carrying out work on behalf of Learning Links (e.g., contractors, students on placement etc.).</p>
Policy	<p>Learning Links Preschool has a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that the rights and best interests of the child are paramount and that we will provide training, resources, information and guidance to support this in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected at all times • Ensure that the people educating and caring for children at the service act in the best interests of the child • Protect and advocate the rights of all children to feel safe, and be safe, at all times • Maintain a culture in which children's rights are protected • Encourage participation from families at the service, supporting a partnership approach and shared responsibility for children's health, safety, wellbeing and development.
Strategies	<p><u>Physical Environment</u> In order to promote a safe physical environment we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all equipment and materials used at the service meet relevant Australian safety standards • Conduct daily checks of the environment and equipment • Remove, repair or replace worn and damaged equipment and resources in a timely manner • Maintain an equipment maintenance schedule • Ensure learning environments are established that provide sufficient space and include well maintained resources and equipment • Organise indoor and outdoor spaces to ensure risks to health and safety are minimised • Conduct scheduled risk assessments of the service environment to determine any risks to children's health and safety • Review risk assessments after any serious report is made to the Regulatory Authority • Ensure smoking is banned within the grounds of, and within the legislated distance of any entrance of an enclosed public space • Ensure secure storage of hazardous products including chemicals and medications. <p><u>Staffing and Supervision</u></p>

	<p>Staff must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that sufficient numbers of educators are employed to provide adequate supervision of children at all times • Manage rosters to ensure that adequate numbers of educators are on duty to meet ratio and qualification requirements and that duty of care implications are applied at all times • Ensure regulatory screening and suitability of staff and volunteers as per the legislation and policy at the time and within an ongoing process • Respond proactively to emerging staff performance concerns <p><u>Child Protection</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all staff including educators, students and volunteers have current Working with children Checks • Undertake training in order to effectively: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make appropriate responses to disclosures of abuse and any allegation of abuse against staff members of the service ○ Understand the responsibilities and processes as a mandatory reporter ○ Be able to recognise the factors that increase the potential for a child's wellbeing to be identified as Risk of Significant Harm ○ Implement procedures for releasing children to the care of authorised persons only.
<p>Roles and Responsibilities</p>	<p><u>Early Childhood Educators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking appropriate training and education on child protection. • Identifying any potential for risk and harm to a child at the service and developing implementing effective protection strategies in consultation with the approved provider and the nominated supervisor. • Cooperating 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 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. • Offering support to the child and their family, and to other staff, in response to concerns or reports relating to the health, safety and wellbeing of a child at the service. • 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 service. • Maintaining confidentiality at all times. • Adhering to all service policies. <p><u>Families</u></p> <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. <p><u>Nominated Supervisor</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure screening and suitability processes are maintained to meet policy and legislated requirements. • Identify and provide appropriate resources and training to assist staff, contractors, visitors, volunteers and students to implement this policy. • Keep up to date with relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy. • Protect the rights of children and families and encourage their participation in decision-making at the service.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that families are made aware of support services available to them and of the assistance these services can provide. <p>Families</p> <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. <p>Families</p> <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.
<p>Related Legislation, Standards, Documents</p>	<p>Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Care Services National Law: Sections 162A, 165, 166, 167 • Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 82,83, 84,99,103,115, 122, 158-159, 165, 168 (2(h)), 175, 176 • Australian Child Protection Legislation: aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/Australian-child-protection-legislation • Australian Privacy Principles- www.oaic.gov.au • Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act) – www.oaic.gov.au/law/act
<p>Review</p>	<p>This policy and guidelines will be reviewed every two years and will incorporate current information, legislation and feedback as required.</p> <p>The service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service 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 service.</p> <p>This policy is owned by: Learning Links Preschool</p> <p>Policy updated on: 8 March 2023 Policy updated by: Director Preschool Version number: 1.0 This version approved by: GM Service Quality, Risk and Compliance This document can be viewed on: SharePoint and Preschool Website</p> <p>Policy due for review: 8 March 2025</p>