

CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) outline that children and young people have a right to be safe and cared for, no matter where they are or who they are with. Children have the right to be protected from violence, harm or neglect. When working with children and young people, it is important to understand children's rights and needs.

We are advocates for children and have a strong commitment to child safety and establishing and maintaining a child safe environment. Children's safety and wellbeing are paramount at our Service. The Heights Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) Service embeds the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and promotes a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is respected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.
2.2.3	Child Protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.
QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S.162A	Child protection training
S.165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S.166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
S.167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment

83	Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
84	Awareness of child protection law
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
102AAB	Safe arrival of children policies and procedures
102AAC	Risk assessment for the purposes of safe arrival of children policies and procedures
102B	Transport risk assessment must be conducted before service transports child
102C	Conduct of risk assessment for transporting of children by the education and care service
102D	Authorisation for service to transport children
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
104	Fencing
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
123	Educator to child ratios- centre based services
136	First aid qualifications
145	Staff record
149	Volunteers and students
155	Interactions with children
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
165	Record of visitors
166	Children not to be alone with visitors
167	Record of service's compliance
168 (h)	Education and care services must have policies- Providing a child safe environment
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
175	Prescribed information to be notified to regulatory authority

RELATED LEGISLATION

Children & Young People (Safety) Act 2017	Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016
<i>Statutes Amendment (Child Sexual Abuse) Act 2021</i>	

RELATED POLICIES

Enrolment Policy
 Fees Policy
 Performance Management Policy
 Medical Conditions Policy
 Mobile Device Usage Policy
 Behaviour Guidance Policy
 Supervision Policy
 Critical Incident & First Aid Policy
 Complaints Policy
 Safe Arrival of Children Policy

PURPOSE

The Heights Out of School Hours Care Service (OSHC) has a legal and ethical responsibility to provide a safe and friendly environment where all children are respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. Children's safety and wellbeing is paramount, and we aim to take all practical steps to protect children and young people from harm, ensuring a healthy and safe environment. Our OSHC Service provides children and staff with an environment free from the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, volunteers, students, educators, approved provider, nominated supervisor, management and visitors of the OSHC Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations the approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for providing a child safe environment and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed. (Reg. 168, Reg. 170).

The National Law requires management to ensure all children being educated and cared for are adequately supervised and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any

hazard likely to cause injury. Our focus is to build a child safe environment which is reflected in our Service policies and procedures and understood and practiced by all children, young people, families, educators, staff, visitors, volunteers and students.

Commitment to the safety of child and young people

Our OSHC Service is committed to being a child safe organisation placing the protection of children as a priority of our responsibilities and obligations. Our *Child Safe Environment Policy* complies with the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission provide guidance for our Service to ensure our policies and procedures, strategies and attitudes, ensure children's safety is paramount and that we continue to improve our child safe culture and practices.

Our OSHC Service has a zero tolerance to harm or risk of harm to a child or young person, and we are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. We ensure all staff, educators, volunteers and students have undertaken current child protection training and understand their obligations as mandatory reporters. We promote diversity and tolerance and aim to form equitable and positive relationships with children. We ensure children and young people participate in decisions affecting them and listen and respect their suggestions and ideas. We respond to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm by reporting to the Department for Child Protection's Child Abuse Report Line.

Our OSHC Service will not tolerate bullying or harassment and will follow procedures and preventative strategies in accordance with our Behaviour Guidance Policy, to manage with bullying and help protect children. Our priority is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and encourage positive relationships.

Governing Council will:

- ensure that the Service is upholding positive and respectful relationships with children, families, staff and educators and prioritise a child safe environment
- oversee policies and procedures so that they are current and available to staff, educators, students, employees, volunteers and families
- respect the voice of the parent community and on behalf of the child and young people to encourage feedback and evaluation of our policies and procedures through surveys, discussions with management – OSHC Advisory Council
- Governing council reserve the right to amend/update this policy at any time and will provide notice to families when amendments/updates occur

Code of Conduct

Our Code of Conduct Policy clearly outlines expectations regarding behaviour and describes the principles, values, and ethical guidelines that guide our staff and stakeholders in their interactions and activities. All educators and staff members are made fully aware that following breaches of the Code of Conduct and role responsibilities may result in disciplinary action which may lead to termination of employment as stated in our *Performance Management Policy*. Individuals can report any concerns they may have about inappropriate actions of any educator, staff, student or volunteer that involves children or young people to management, ensuring a prompt and thorough response to maintain a safe and secure environment for all.

Educators will:

- promote a culture of child safety and wellbeing in all aspects of our OSHC Service's operations
- adhere to our *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- provide evidence and certification of child protection legislation training (RAN) and Working with Children Check
- educators will notify the service of any change or withdrawal of their Working With Children Check
- comply with screening, onboarding and induction processes when being employed by the Service
- provide adequate supervision of children at all times
- ensure the safe use of online environments
- take reasonable action to protect children and young people from harm and risk of harm
- ensure the service premise is free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol
- be responsible for their own, and others health and safety
- be a positive role model to children and young people
- respect children and young people's privacy and dignity at all times
- listen and respond appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people
- report any allegations of harm or risk of harm to CARL as mandatory reporter and make an internal report after you have reported to CARL
- notify the approved provider and/or the regulatory authority within 24 hours of any serious incident or complaint as per the National Regulations
- encourage children and young people to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them.

Educators will not:

- discriminate against any child or young person, on the grounds of age, cultural background, race or gender.
- put children or a young person at risk of harm, by refusing the right to eat, making threats, exposing children to inappropriate language or material (movies, internet, photos)
- develop any 'special' relationships with children or young people
- be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while working; bring alcohol or drugs onto the premises
- smoke or vape in or on surrounding areas of the Service.

Parents and families will:

- support the practices outlined in this policy and contribute towards a child safe environment
- be encouraged to raise any concerns regarding potential risks and hazards in the environment
- be respectful towards children of other families when entering the Service
- inform the Service with any questions or concerns that they may have regarding the safety of their child, through the most effective means accessible to them, the director will document these.

Parents and families will not:

- put children or a young person at risk by bringing pets on site or smoking or vaping in or on surrounding areas of the Service
- be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when arriving on site or bring alcohol or drugs onto the premises
- inappropriately engage with children of other families, for example, behavioural management, asking for information or making personal comments
- actively engage in activities with children, during pick up and drop off time

Directors/ Nominated Supervisors will:

- conduct a periodic review and maintenance of up-to-date records of volunteer, staff, and educator's Working with Children Check, including the Working with Children Check number and the date on which each Working with Children Check expires

- verify the Working with Children Check with the DHS Screening Unit to ensure that it is valid and current
- maintain records by placing the Working with Children Check in the individual's file
- verify that existing educators have renewed their Working with Children Check every 5 years and record the status as *Not Prohibited*
- immediately contact the Department of Human Services Screening Unit when we become aware of certain information regarding any person involved with our organisation, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.
- regularly update their knowledge of child protection law and policy so that they can provide training and support to the educational team
- verify all student and volunteer WWCCs prior to placement. Any visitor who has direct contact with children will be required to provide a WWCC for verification prior to coming into contact with children (*best practice*).
- keep a record for each day a student or volunteer participates in the service including date and hours of participation.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT SAFETY CHECKLISTS

Risk Assessment

It is a legislative requirement that all services implement a risk management system where they identify and manage hazards and risks within the workplace to ensure a child safe environment. Strategies are in place to make sure child safety is embedded across our Service through compliance with the *Education and Care National Regulations* are the National Principles for Child Safety – Child Safe Standards.

Directors and Nominated Supervisors are responsible for conducting risk assessments, keeping documentation and ensuring that the educational team have an understanding of their duty of care and key responsibilities.

The key principles of risk management include:

1. Identifying all hazards or potential hazards in the OSHC Service
2. Assess the risk of harm or potential harm for each hazard
3. Control or manage the risk – Risk Rating Matrix
4. Monitor and improve safety – Risk Assessment Action Plan
5. Evaluate and Review

Risk Assessments will be completed:

- when children's safety may be jeopardised
- when organising an excursion/incursion
- as part of daily practice with regular safety checks to maintain basic standards of safety within the Service venues and designated areas

Director/Nominated Supervisor will conduct weekly and termly checklists to assist and record inspections of the physical environment where foreseeable risks may be evident and cause harm or injury to a child. Any findings that require attention will be either dealt with immediately or submitted through the online portal for grounds and maintenance at the school.

Equipment, resource and furniture maintenance

To ensure a child safe environment free from hazards, our OSHC Service has implemented practices to uphold Australian Safety Standards. The venue of our OSHC Service, and all equipment and furniture used within the service are audited to ensure all aspects are safe, clean and in good repair. Educators are aware that toys and equipment need to be checked to ensure they are safe and developmentally appropriate for preschool and primary aged children. Weekly checks occur within the service and are logged via the *OSHC Room Weekly Safety Checklist* form. Checks occur within the Service to ensure that all toys, furniture and equipment are in good condition and working order and also monitor the use of bins, electrical devices, cords and wires in the space. Each year the Service budgets for the upgrade and replacement of toys, resources and furniture to uphold safe standards.

Storage of hazardous substances

We reduce the risk of harm to children, young people and educators by using eco-friendly products. Our OSHC Service will endeavour to provide a safe environment where necessary chemical and hazardous equipment are safely stored away from children and handled appropriately. Signage is displayed at all areas containing chemical or hazardous equipment.

Child Protection

Children and young people always have a right to be safe and protected. To comply with legislation and ensure a child safe environment, all educators, staff, volunteers and students are

advised of current child protection law and understand any obligations under the law. Supervision is effective to ensure they understand that *child safety is everyone's responsibility*. Regular training and development will be provided through staff meetings, educational workshops and updates from the department.

All management (with direct responsibility or contact of children or young people), educators and staff, volunteers and students are mandatory notifiers and have a legal obligation to notify the Department for Human Services if they suspect a child or young person is, or may be at, risk of harm. Notification must be made to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 or if at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000. All reports of suspected child sexual abuse are to be made to the SA Police. Neglecting these obligations could potentially be deemed a criminal offence.

Emergency and evacuation procedures

Management will ensure that copies of the emergency and evacuation floor plan is displayed in prominent positions near each exit of the service premises, including indoor and outdoor learning areas. All staff and educators are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and regulatory requirements. Rehearsals for emergency and evacuation procedures, including lock downs, are conducted at least twice every three months. Records will be logged for all rehearsals.

Online Safety

Our OSHC Service is committed to create and maintain a safe online environment with support and collaboration with children, young people, staff, educators, families and community. The school IT Department ensures anti-virus and internet security systems are installed to block access to unsuitable web sites, newsgroups and chat rooms. Only educational software programs and apps that have appropriate content and have been examined prior to allowing their use are used in the Service. Children are always supervised using any technology.

Written authorisation is requested as part of the enrolment process for children to have their photo taken and published as part of OSHC Webpage, Newsletters and observations for programming purposes. The identity of a child is not published on any platform.

Personal mobile phones or any personal electronic device are not used to take photos or video of children at the Service. Only Service issued electronic devices are used and strict controls are in place to ensure the appropriate storage and retention of images and video of children.

Meal Times

Meals provided at The Heights OSHC are high in nutritional value and meet the Australian Dietary Guidelines, as well as: Right Bite Food and Drink Supply Standards for South Australian schools. Please note afternoon snack (served during after-school care, vacation care & pupil-free days) is a single serve accompanied by a selection of seasonal fruit that children can choose from. It is recommended that families pack additional food when children attend OSHC. Meals are prepared with consideration for different cultural and faith backgrounds. A vegetarian option and dietary alternative are always provided.

Any child allergies, food intolerances or specifications must be recorded on the enrolment form. The Heights OSHC is a nut free service.

Session	Meal	Time
Before School Care	Breakfast	7:00 am – 8:00 am
After School Care	Snack (single serving)	3:05 pm
Vacation Care/Pupil Free Day	Breakfast & Snack (single serving)	As above

Continuous review

To ensure we maintain a culture of continuous improvement, we will ensure our child safe practices are regularly reviewed, evaluated and improved. We aim to ensure all educators, staff, student and volunteers understand and effectively implement our policies and procedures to provide a child safe environment at our OSHC Service.

SOURCES

ACECQA. (2023). Policy and procedure guidelines. [Providing a Child Safe Environment- Policy Guidelines](#)
 Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
 Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [National Model Code for Early Childhood Education and Care](#).
 Australian Government Department of Education. [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0, 2022](#)
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 Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017
 Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016
 Children's Health and Safety – An analysis of Quality Area 2 of the National Quality Standard
 Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935
 Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023).
 Government of South Australia Human Services [Child safe environments](#)
 Government of South Australia. Department of Human Services. Guideline to writing a policy

Government of South Australia. Department for Child Protection <https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/>

Government of South Australia. Department of Child Protection. Information sharing guidelines.

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

[United Nations Convention of Rights of the Child, \(1989\). \(UNCRC\)](#)

Work Health and Safety Act, (2011).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY:	NAME	POSITION
	Cooper Rowberry	OSHC Director
	Ingrid Lees	Acting Principal
	Representatives	Governing Council
POLICY REVIEWED	JUNE 2025	
NEXT REVIEW DATE	JUNE 2027	
MODIFICATIONS		
MAY 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of Policy	
JUNE 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governing council feedback received and reviewed• Governing council feedback implemented as updates to policy• Governing council updates reviewed and adjusted with OSHC advisory committee• Submitted to governing council for approval• Governing council approval received	