

WRITING, REVIEWING & MAINTAINING POLICIES

Whilst it is important to have policies and procedures in an early childhood education and care service, it is equally important that the policies are regularly reviewed and amendments made to cater for changes in legislation and researched best practice, and changes are made to service procedures that aim to support ongoing quality improvement.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
7.1.1	Service philosophy and purposes	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service.
7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.
7.2.1	Continuous improvement	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.
7.2.2	Educational leadership	The educational leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle.
7.2.3	Development of professionals	Educators, co-ordinations and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated, and individual plans are in place to support learning and development.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

31	Conditions on service approval
55-56	Quality Improvement Plan
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures affecting ability of family to utilise services

PURPOSE

To ensure compliance with the National Quality Framework, our Service will review our policies and procedures on an annual basis, or more frequently if required due to changes having occurred within the service, or if considered best practice in respect of current research. We aim to work in collaboration with our educators and families, gathering feedback when updating our policies and procedures to ensure that the needs of children being educated and cared for are always being met.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, educators, staff, management, students, volunteers and visitors of the service.

IMPLEMENTATION

- All policies and procedures will be made available for families and educators to view at all times.
- All policies developed will be made in consultation with management, staff and families of children attending the service.
- Our educators and staff will ensure that all policies and procedures are reviewed as per the document review routine, or more often if required (e.g. due to changes in regulations, legislation, and/or service practices). This gives both families and educators opportunities to suggest aspects or areas that may need to be modified or improved. Each document has a recommended review date stated in the “Review” section of the policy document.
- Educators, staff, and family members are invited to have input into the policies and procedures at any time of the year, not only at the scheduled review time for a particular policy.
- All policies will be sourced/referenced, and dated at each review and educators and other staff will continuously seek out relevant new information and research to be included in policies in order to provide the best possible environment and practices.
- All stakeholders at the service must be informed of any changes to policies. This will occur in writing and be provided to families, educators, other staff, management, the committee, and any other applicable individuals.
- Families will have the opportunity to revise and help plan policies via Newsletters and specific letters to families discussing the policy or a draft of the proposed policy and given the opportunity to respond.

- All policies that are being either reviewed or developed will be displayed on the service's noticeboard, so that all stakeholders are aware of progress at all times and can be involved in the review.

PROCEDURE FOR REVIEWING A POLICY:

- A policy has been flagged for review due to routine reflection, an incident, feedback, or the 'continuous improvement' process, including the policy review calendar.
 - All major stakeholders are invited to review the policy and suggest amendments (this can be done via committee meeting, email, newsletters, and/or a display in the service).
 - A time frame of 2 weeks is given for all stakeholders to present information or feedback for the policy after which management will collate all suggestions and create a draft policy.
 - The draft policy is made available to all major stakeholders, again via formal meeting, email, newsletters, and/or a display in the service.
 - A time frame of 7 days is given for stakeholders to respond to provide further suggestions/feedback. If the policy draft is agreed upon by all (no objections or further recommendations are received), the draft is reposted as the reviewed and/or amended service's Policy.
- The service encourages a holistic approach to policies. Whilst a schedule is maintained to ensure all policies are reviewed regularly, the service may revise and if necessary, amend unscheduled policies based on the needs of the service, particularly if there is an incident, regulation change, or feedback received.
 - All policies will use information from reliable sources and provide dated references.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REGULATIONS;

The service must ensure that parents of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have a significant impact on:

- The service's provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; or
- The family's ability to utilise the service.

The service must ensure that parents of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

If the service considers that the notice period would pose a risk to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child enrolled at the service, the approved provider must ensure that parents of children enrolled at the service are notified as soon as practicable after making a change.

The service must ensure that copies of the current policies and procedures are available for inspection at the service upon request.

SOURCES:

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011).

Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4th Ed.).

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	JANUARY 2019	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JANUARY 2020
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory statement added. • Sources/references corrected, updated, and alphabetised. • Minor formatting (line spacing & paragraph spacing) for consistency throughout policy. 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
JANUARY 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed and created new policy and format. Updated references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard 		JANUARY 2019