



# Child Protection Policy

<b>Policy Number</b>	QA2/2	<b>Title</b>	Child Protection Policy
<b>Revision</b>	2.0	<b>Written By</b>	Policy Team and Nominated Supervisor
<b>Reviewed By</b>	EHOOSH Management Committee	<b>Approved By</b>	EHOOSH Management Committee
<b>Supersedes</b>	1.2	<b>Effective Date</b>	June 2025

## 1. Policy Statement

Eastwood Heights OOSH is committed to the protection and safety of all children and young people in our care. This policy reflects our obligation to act in accordance with child protection legislation, uphold the rights of the child, and foster a child safe culture. The approved provider and all staff members are mandatory reporters and must take action where there is a reasonable suspicion that a child is at risk of significant harm. We are committed to providing a safe, supportive, and responsive environment that prioritises children's wellbeing. We are further committed to ensuring all educators and staff have a full understanding of their responsibilities as a Mandatory Reporter and are supported in fulfilling these.

## 2. Background

This policy exists to support our legal responsibilities under the NSW Children and Young Persons Act 1998, NSW Child Protection Act 2012, and to align with the NSW

Child Safe Standards. Furthermore, 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.

### 3. Procedure

Under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, the approved provider and all staff members are mandatory reporters. They are legally required to make a report to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) if they suspect, on reasonable grounds, that a child is at risk of significant harm.

A child may be at risk of significant harm if you suspect:

- Physical Abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual Abuse
- Psychological Harm
- Danger to self or others
- Relinquishing Care
- Carer Concern
- Unborn Child

Significant harm refers to serious concerns that warrant statutory intervention. It is not minor or trivial and may result from a single incident or an accumulation of factors. Reports should be made regardless of whether the family consents.

Reasonable grounds exist when concerns are based on:

- First hand observations of the child or family.
- Disclosures made by the child, parent, or another person.
- Information inferred from professional training, experience, or knowledge.

Mandatory reporters are not required to confirm or prove abuse, only to act on reasonable suspicion.

Additionally, the Approved Provider must ensure that all Nominated Supervisors and Responsible Persons have successfully completed an approved child protection training course as required by the relevant regulatory authority

### **3.1. Mandatory Reporting (MRG)**

The approved provider and all EHOOSH staff are mandatory reporters. Under Section 27 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, they must report to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm. Reports must be made promptly via the ChildStory Reporter tool or by phoning 132 111. These reports should be based on observed behaviours, disclosures, or professional knowledge, and must be documented clearly, factually, and confidentially.

### **3.2. Responding to Disclosures**

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse, educators must respond in a calm and supportive manner. It is essential to listen carefully, reassure the child that they are being taken seriously, prompt the child for further details and avoid asking leading questions. Educators must document the child's statements accurately using their own words, without interpretation or assumption. Furthermore, educators must reassure the child that it is not their fault, it was right to tell, it is not okay for adults to harm children and explain what steps will follow.

This information must then be reported immediately to the Nominated Supervisor or RPIC, who will support the reporting process to the appropriate statutory authority. Where possible the educator will be provided time to complete a Child Protection Concern Report. Staff must maintain confidentiality and only share information with those involved in the response.

### **3.3. Recruitment and Screening**

All staff, volunteers, and contractors engaged at the service must undergo stringent screening procedures to ensure their suitability to work with children. This includes providing a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC), undergoing reference checks, and participating in structured interviews where child safe values and behaviours are assessed. Through our induction process, educators are to read about the code of conduct, ethics and other child protection resources to create a sense of boundaries that they are not to cross

### **3.4. Child Empowerment and Participation**

The service promotes child voice, empowerment, and active participation in decision-making

that affects their safety and wellbeing. Educators deliver child-safe education, such as personal safety and protective behaviours programs, and foster a culture where children are encouraged to speak up if they feel unsafe or unsure. The rights of children to be heard, respected, and involved are embedded in everyday interactions and program planning.

### 3.5. Safe Environments

Creating and maintaining a child safe environment is a core priority. Educators must actively always supervise children, with specific attention to transition periods, high-risk areas, and one to one situations. Physical spaces must be regularly risk-assessed and maintained to reduce hazards. The use of digital technologies is strictly regulated to ensure online safety. High risk activities and excursions are subject to detailed risk-benefit assessments that prioritise children's wellbeing.

### 3.6. Reporting and Documenting

All concerns, disclosures, reports to authorities, and actions taken must be documented using the service's record keeping procedures. Documentation must be factual, dated, and signed by the person making the record. These records are stored securely and confidentially in accordance with the National Regulations. The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for ensuring all documentation is complete and that follow-up actions are implemented as required.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

#### Approved Provider

- Ensure policy compliance and staff training
- Report allegations against staff to the Regulatory Authority and OCG
- Ensure child protection is embedded in the service's risk management and quality improvement processes
- Monitor compliance with the Working with Children Check (WWCC) requirements

#### Nominated Supervisor

- Coordinate all child protection reports
- Support staff with decision making and documentation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain current knowledge of legislation and reporting tools (e.g., MRG)</li> <li>• Ensure child protection information and updates are shared during team meetings and inductions</li> </ul>
<b>Responsible Person in Charge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement procedures daily</li> <li>• Maintain supervision and safe practices</li> <li>• Assist with documentation and reporting when disclosures or incidents arise</li> <li>• Guide new and relief staff in understanding child protection responsibilities</li> </ul>
<b>Educators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will develop trusting and secure relationships with all the children at the service</li> <li>• Be vigilant to signs of harm</li> <li>• Follow reporting procedures</li> <li>• Engage in child protection training</li> <li>• Always uphold professional boundaries and ethical standards</li> <li>• Promote child empowerment and respectful relationships</li> <li>• Guide personal safety and protective behaviours through emotion coaching and general support</li> <li>• Make appropriate responses to all disclosures of abuse and any allegation of abuse</li> </ul>
<b>Families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be informed of the policy</li> <li>• Raise any concerns with the Nominated Supervisor</li> <li>• Support their child's right to safety and protection by engaging in open communication with educators</li> </ul>

## 5. References

### 5.1. Statutory Authority

- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- NSW Child Safe Standards

## 5.2. Relevant Service Policies

- Code of Conduct
- Staffing Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Behavior Management Policy
- Grievance and Complaints Policy
- Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy

## 5.3. National Frameworks

- National Quality Standard
- My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care
- Child Safe Standards (NSW Office of the Children's Guardian)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

## 6. Legislative Requirements.

### Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Regulation 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulation 84	Awareness of child protection law
Regulation 85	A service must take appropriate action to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of children following an incident, injury, trauma, or illness.
Regulation 86	A record must be kept of any incident, injury, trauma or illness
Regulation 87	The service must notify parents as soon as practicable, and within 24 hours, of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs
Regulation 99	A child must not leave the premises unless authorised in writing by a parent, or in the case of an emergency.
Regulation 100	A risk assessment must be conducted before an excursion to identify and minimise any risks, ensuring adequate supervision and child safety.
Regulation 155	Educators must interact with children in a way that is respectful, promotes their self esteem, and maintains their dignity and rights.
Regulation 156	Services must implement behaviour guidance strategies that are appropriate to the child's age, development, and cultural background, supporting a protective and nurturing environment.
Regulation 168(2)(h)	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 173	Prescribed information to be displayed
Regulation 183	Storage of records and other documents

## Revision Chronology

Version Number	Date	Reason for Change
1.0	01/11/2018	Creation
1.1	01/12/2018	Endorsed by OOSH executive committee
1.2	01/06/2020	Review and evaluation
2.0	01/06/2025	Updated and reviewed in new policy template