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1.0 Purpose

This policy will provide guidelines to ensure:

- the adequate supervision of all enrolled children is always maintained.
- the provision of a safe and secure environment for all children at Meli Kindergarten Services (Meli).

2.0 Values

Meli is committed to:

- providing appropriate supervision for all enrolled children in all aspects of the service's program that is reflective of the children's needs, abilities, age, and circumstances
- ensuring all children are directly and actively supervised by educators employed or engaged by Meli
- maintaining a duty of care to all children at Meli
- ensuring there is an understanding of the shared legal responsibility and accountability between, and a commitment by, all persons to implement the procedures and practices outlined in this policy.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Meli including during offsite excursions and activities.

4.0 Background

Supervision is essential in ensuring that children's safety is protected in the service environment. Children have a right to be protected from potential hazards and dangers posed by products, plants, objects, animals, and people in the immediate and wider environment.

Supervision is an integral part of the care and education of children and requires staff members to make ongoing assessments of the child and the activities in which they are engaged; utilising range of skills such as positioning and peripheral vision. Active supervision assists in the development of positive relationships between educators, children and their families, and informs ongoing assessment and future planning. Adequate supervision requires teamwork and good communication between educators.

5.0 Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Adequate supervision: Adequate supervision (in relation to this policy) entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, always being in sight and/or hearing of an educator, including during toileting, sleep, rest, and transition routines. Services are required to always comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active, and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always able to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- Number, age, and abilities of children
- Number and positioning of educators
- Current activity of each child
- Areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- Developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- Experience, knowledge, and skill of each educator
- Need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

Attendance Record: kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering and collecting the child or of the Nominated Supervisor or educator (Regulation 158(1)).

Duty of Care: a common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations and staff to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonably foreseeable risk of injury. In the context of this policy, duty of care refers to the responsibility of education and care services and their staff to provide children with an adequate level of care and protection against foreseeable harm and injury.

Hazard: a source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.

Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Record: Contains details of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs while the child is being educated and cared for by the service. Any incident, injury, trauma, or illness must be recorded as soon as is practicable but not later than 24 hours after the occurrence. Details required include the:

- Name and age of the child
- Circumstances leading to the incident, injury, trauma or illness (including any symptoms)
- Time and date
- Details of action taken by the service including any medication administered, first aid provided, or medical personnel contacted
- Details of any witnesses
- Names of any person the service notified or attempted to notify, and the time and date of this

- Signature of the person making the entry, and time and date of this.

These details need to be kept for the period of time specified in Regulation 183. A sample Incident, Injury, Trauma Record, and an Illness Record is available on the ACECQA website.

Notifiable Incident: an incident involving workplace health and safety that is required by law to be reported to WorkSafe Victoria. Notification is required for incidents that result in death or serious injury/illness, or dangerous occurrences. For a complete list of incidents that must be reported to WorkSafe Victoria, refer to the Guide to Incident Notification on the WorkSafe Victoria website: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

Serious Incident: A serious incident (Regulation 12) is defined as any of the following:

- the death of a child while being educated and cared for at the service or following an incident while being educated and care for by the service.
- any incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child while the child is being educated and cared for, which:
 - a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or
 - the child attended or ought reasonably to have attended a hospital e.g. a broken limb*
 - any incident involving serious illness of a child while that child is being educated and cared for by a service for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital e.g., severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis*
Note: *In some cases, a General Practitioner conducts consultation from the hospital site. Only treatment related to serious injury, illness or trauma is required to be notified, not other health matters.*
 - any emergency for which emergency services attended.
Note: *This means an incident, situation, or event where there is an imminent or severe risk to the health, safety, or wellbeing of a person at an education and care service. It does not mean an incident where emergency services attended as a precaution.*
- a child appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for at the service a child appears to have been taken or removed from the service in a manner that contravenes the National Regulations
- a child was mistakenly locked in or out of the service premises or any part of the premises.

Notifications of serious incidents should be made to the regulatory authority (DET) through the NQA IT System. If this is not practicable, the notification can be made initially in whatever way is best in the circumstances.

Some of serious incidents above are also reportable incidents under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 and require notification to WorkSafe.

6.0 Responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider (Meli) and persons with management control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators, and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Always complying with the legislated educator-to-child ratios (<i>National Law: Sections 169</i>) (<i>Regulations 123</i>)	R	R	✓		
Counting only those educators who are working directly with children at the service in the educator-to-child ratios (<i>Regulation 122</i>)	R	R	✓		
Keeping a record of educators working directly with children (<i>Regulation 151</i>)	R	✓			
Ensuring an unauthorised person is under the direct supervision of an educator whilst at the service (<i>National Law: Section 170 (2)</i>)	R	R	✓		
Ensuring, in addition to ratio requirements, that a minimum of two educators are always rostered on duty children and are in attendance at the service	✓	✓	✓		
Ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the service are always adequately supervised by being in sight and/or hearing of an educator; including during eating, toileting, sleep, rest, and transition routines (<i>National Law: Section 165 (1), (2)</i>)	R	R	✓		
Considering the design and arrangement of the service environment to support active supervision (<i>Regulation 115</i>). This may be supported by a supervision plan (refer to Attachment 1)	R	✓	✓		
Managing potential risk of abuse or harm to each child, including fulfilling duty of care and legal obligations to protect children and prevent any reasonable, foreseeable risk of injury or harm (refer to Child Safe Environment Policy)	R	R	R		R
Identifying high-risk activities, including excursions (refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy, Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy and Water Safety Policy), through a risk management process, and implementing strategies to improve children's safety (<i>Regulation 100, 101, 102B, 102C</i>)	R	R	✓		
Ensuring supervision standards are maintained during educator breaks, including during lunch breaks	R	R	✓		
Providing safe spaces for children, which allow for adequate supervision, and which include safe fall zones, good traffic flow, maintenance of buildings and equipment, and minimising trip hazards	R	R	✓		
Implementing induction procedures to inform casual and relief staff about the supervision strategies outlined in this policy	✓	✓			✓
Notifying the Regulatory Authority (DET) within 24 hours of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a serious incident occurring at the service, including when a child appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for (<i>National Law: Section 174(2)(a)</i>), (<i>Regulations 176(2)(a)(ii)</i>) • a complaint alleging that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child has been compromised or that the law has been breached (<i>National Law: Section 174(2)(b)</i>), (<i>Regulations 175(2)(c), 176(2)(b)</i>) 	R	✓			

Notifying parents/guardians of a serious incident involving their child as soon as possible, but not more than 24 hours after the occurrence (Regulation 86, 87 (3)(e))	R	✓	✓		
Reporting notifiable incidents to Worksafe Victoria	R	✓			
Evaluating supervision procedures regularly	R	✓	✓		
Complying with the service's Excursions and Service Events, Road Safety and Safe Transport and Water Safety Policy	R	R	✓	✓	✓
Identifying the potential for the risks of abuse or harm to each child, including fulfilling duty of care and legal obligations to protect children and prevent any reasonable, foreseeable risk of injury or harm	R	R	R		
Providing support to educators when children with challenging behaviours or additional leads are involved	✓	✓			
Ensuring that all children are accounted for, including by referring to attendance records at various times throughout the day		✓	✓		
Adjusting supervision strategies to suit the service environment, educator skills, and age mix, dynamics, and size of the group of children being supervised and the activities being undertaken	R	R	✓		
Always maintaining a duty of care to children (including when the child is on the premises but not signed into or signed out of the care of the service and the parent/guardian or person delivering or collecting the child is responsible for supervising that child)		R	R	R	
Balancing supervision requirements with children's needs for privacy and independence		✓	✓		
Communicating with other educators regularly to always ensure adequate supervision		R	✓		
Adhering to the Child Sage Environment Policy	R	R	R	R	R
Ensuring doors and gates are always closed to prevent children from leaving the service unaccompanied or from accessing unsupervised/unsafe areas of the service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Deciding when to interrupt and redirect children's play to always ensure safety		✓	✓		✓
Identifying opportunities to support and extend children's learning while also recognising their need to play without adult intervention		✓	✓		✓
Conducting daily safety checks of the environment to assess safety and to remove hazards		✓	✓		
Supervising/being aware of children's daily arrival and departure from the service and being aware of the person who has authority to collect the child (refer to Delivery and Collection of Children Policy)		✓	✓	✓	
Supervising their child/ren before signing them into the program and after they have signed them out of the program				✓	
Enabling educators to supervise children at all times e.g. by making arrangements to speak with educators at a mutually suitable time				✓	

7.0 Evaluation

To assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, Meli, as the Approved Provider, will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- record and monitor complaints and incidents in relation to the supervision of children and amend the policy and procedures as required
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (Regulation 172 (2)).

8.0 Attachments

Attachment 1: Supervision risk management template

9.0 Related Meli policies and procedures

- Administration of First Aid
- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Compliments and Complaints
- Dealing with Medical Conditions
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Excursions and Service Events
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Interactions with Children
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Relaxation and Sleep
- Road Safety and Safe Transport
- Staffing
- Tobacco Alcohol and other Drugs
- Water Safety

10.0 Relevant legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Child Safe Standards, Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017
- Worker Screening Act 2020
- Worker Screening Regulations 2021 (Vic)

11.0 Sources

- Kidsafe: www.kidsafe.com.au
- The Royal Children's Hospital Community Information team (formerly Safety Centre) provides information on safety promotion and injury prevention: www.rch.org.au.
- WorkSafe Victoria: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au
- Guide to the National Quality Framework (ACECQA): <http://acecqa.gov.au/>
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law 2010 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (ACECQA): <http://acecqa.gov.au/>

ATTACHMENT 1: SUPERVISION RISK MANAGEMENT TEMPLATE

This template is designed as a tool to be developed and used by all educators involved in the supervision of children at the service and should be reviewed regularly and made available to all staff working in the program. There may be additional areas that your service will want to include in the supervision risk management template.

Area/equipment	Potential supervision risk	Action to reduce or eliminate risk
For example: Fixed equipment e.g. swings, fixed climbing equipment, slides etc.		
For example: Layout of the internal and/or external areas of the service including a description of areas that provide challenges to supervision e.g. children's bathrooms, L-shaped playgrounds or playrooms, behind structures or features in the playground etc.		
For example: Staff supervision responsibilities including: quiet/active learning spaces; during indoor and outdoor programs; specific programmed experiences; and the supervision of students and volunteers		
For example: Potential hazards e.g. protruding tree roots, small pieces of equipment etc.		
For example: Arrival and departure of children		