WRITING, REVIEWING & MAINTAINING POLICIES POLICY

Under the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place under regulation 168 and 169. While 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 to service procedures that aim to support ongoing quality improvement.

Engagement in regular review of policies and procedures ensure that they align with quality practice within the Service and are responsive to feedback identified through the service's risk management and quality improvement systems. [Guide to National Quality Framework, 2017 (amended 2023)]

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES		
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions
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.
7.2.1	Continuous improvement	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
31	Conditions on service approval-quality improvement plan

55	Quality improvement plans
56	Review and revision of 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

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, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Policies and procedures are an integral part of the documentation required to meet legislative requirements for all early childhood education and care services. Policies and procedures clearly outline the processes all staff employed by a service will follow and assist all staff to understand their roles and responsibilities. They ensure a consistent approach and embedded practice across all operations and practices of a service and help to inform families how the service operates.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE:

- our policies and procedures are underpinned by the *Early Years Learning Framework* and ECA Code of Ethics and address the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, National Quality Standard, Family Assistance Law*, and other state/territory laws as applicable

- all policies and procedures will be made available for families, educators, visitors, students and staff to view at all times
- all policies developed will be made in consultation with management, staff and families of children attending the Service
- 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 families, educators and staff 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 and changes are clearly made through version control
- 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
- policies include clear, simple statements and are presented in a logical format
- procedures include detailed descriptions of how each policy will be implemented within the service and provide step-by-step instructions to ensure each staff member or any other person can follow in a particular circumstance
- all policies will be signed, 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
- policies will be informed by relevant authorities to ensure best practice- e.g.: KidSafe, Cancer Council, Red Nose
- 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 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 will be sent to families and staff, so that all stakeholders are aware of progress at all times and can be involved in the review
- all revised/updated policies are included in the Policy Folders. Updates will be made to the Family Handbook, Staff Handbook and other related documents.
- policies are accessible to all staff and families through the Laverton Community Children's Centre Website Parents portal.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Services must have policies and procedures in place relating to the categories listed in Regulation 168 of the *National Regulations*. Services may have additional policies and procedures dependent upon their unique situation and operation requirements.

In accordance with Regulation 172, our 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.

The approved provider must ensure the following Policies are in place (Reg.168):

- Health and Safety
    - Nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements
    - Sun protection
    - Water safety- including water safety during any water-based activities
    - The administration of first aid
    - Sleep and rest for children
- Incident, injury, trauma and illness
- Dealing with Infectious Diseases
- Dealing with Medical Conditions
- Emergency and Evacuation
- Delivery of Children to, and Collection from, education and care service premises
- Safe Transportation of Children

- Excursions
- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Staffing
    - Code of Conduct
    - Determining the Responsible Person
    - Participation of Volunteers and students
- Interactions with Children
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Governance and Management
    - Confidentiality of records
- Acceptance and refusal of authorisations
- Payment of Fees
- Dealing with Complaints

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

The *Writing and Reviewing Policies Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in conjunction with children, families, staff, educators and management.

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2012). *How to Develop and Update Policies Successfully (without the stress).*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). *Guide to the National Quality Framework* Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Krystle Hills	Centre Manager	19/12/2023
POLICY REVIEWED	February 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	February 2026
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy review • sources checked for currency and updated as required		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
DECEMBER 2023	• annual policy review • updated Reg. 168 policy requirements • sources checked for currency and updated as required		DECEMBER 2024