



## Supervision & Interactions with Children

---

### Purpose of this Policy

To ensure positive interactions and mutually supportive relationships between educators and children.

---

### **School Support Services Educators caring and educating for children (included in the educator to child ratio) will:**

- Educators will provide an environment which is generally relaxed and happy.
- Educators will respond sensitively and appropriately to all children's efforts to communicate.
- Educators will consistently respond positively to all children who require their attention.
- Educators will engage in sustained conversation surrounding children's interests throughout the session.
- Educators will ensure children feel comfortable to express their ideas, feelings and thoughts.
- Educators will collaborate with children about routines and experiences.
- Educators will respond positively and respectfully to children's comments, questions and requests for assistance.
- Educators will participate in play when invited, using children's cues to guide their level and type of involvement.
- Educators will use children's cues to guide spontaneous learning experiences.
- Educators will ensure interactions with children are purposeful and meaningful.
- Educators will ensure adequate supervision (refer to the following notes) at all times whilst educating and caring for children.

**What is adequate supervision?**

Supervision is an integral part of the whole care and education experience. At its most basic level, supervision helps to protect children from hazards or harm that may arise in their daily experiences in play, interactions with others, and daily routines. Adequate supervision means that an adult can respond immediately including when a child is distressed or is in a hazardous situation. Supervision is constantly observing and relating to individual children and groups of children to contribute to their safety and wellbeing. Supervision involves more than preventing or responding to potential or actual hazards or harm. It requires the staff member to be actively involved with children and have knowledge of what each child is doing at any given time of the day. Through supervision staff member get to know each child and develop essential understandings about them in the social setting of the children's service. Thoughtful supervision of children creates opportunities to assess each child's strengths and interests and ways of relating to other children and adults. These assessments are valuable contributions to planning the program. Sharing assessments with families, with others responsible for the child and with the children themselves is important (for example, in school holiday care services with school staff). This helps to build partnerships and increase understanding of children. Supervision can contribute to building positive relationships between staff member and children. When children are being supervised adequately, there will be evidence of strong, mutually respectful relationships between staff member and children.

**What does adequate supervision look like?**

Although the provision of adequate supervision depends somewhat on the children's ages and abilities, every child at the service should always be monitored actively and diligently. It means knowing where children are at all times. Children of different ages and abilities will need different levels of supervision. Younger children will always need to be in sight of an adult whereas older children may not. In general, the younger children are, the more they may need an adult to be physically present and close by to support and help them. Adequate supervision is therefore likely to be different in some ways for different services. For example, in a centre-based service for young children, adequate supervision will mean that the children remain in close proximity to the adult who is supervising them. In contrast, in a school holiday care service, in which children are older, knowing where each child is and ensuring that staff members are in a position to respond may be considered adequate supervision. Whenever children are being cared for, staff will need to make decisions throughout the day about where they are best placed to adequately supervise each child. In a group of children of the same age there will be some children who need more supervision than others. Staff members learn about this as they get to know children.

### **Planning for supervision**

For centre-based services and school age care services, several factors affect decisions about how many staff members are needed for supervision and where they should be placed. The number of staff members and/or other adults needed in each area of the service for adequate supervision will need to be carefully considered. It will depend on the number of children and the different areas in which the children are located at any one time during the day. A flexible approach to staff placement throughout the day will be required to ensure adequate supervision. Adequate supervision requires teamwork and constant communication among all staff members. All areas available to children in all service types must be supervised. All staff members must be alert to and aware of what is going on around them. Staff members must be alert to the potential for accidents, injuries and other harmful incidents throughout the whole service, not just within their own immediate area.

Reference - <http://www.education.vic.gov.au>

**Volunteers and students, while at the OSHC service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures**