



Providing a Child Safe Environment

Policy Title	Providing a child Safe Environment
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Policy Statement

SHARE is committed to providing an environment that ensures the safety, health, and wellbeing of all children always. The welfare and protection of children is of paramount importance.

We will:

- Take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury or trauma.
- Ensure children are always adequately supervised in both indoor and outdoor environments.
- Maintain a smoke-free, vape-free, alcohol-free and drug-free environment, including the prohibition of vaping substances and devices, in line with national regulations.
- Prohibit staff from using personal devices in program spaces except in an emergency. Service devices must have cameras disabled/covered. Photographs of children are not permitted under any circumstances, except when prior approval has been obtained from the Responsible Person and Nominated Supervisor to record a severe injury for reporting purposes.
- Ensure educators understand their legal responsibilities as mandatory reporters to protect children they suspect may be at risk of significant harm.
- Foster a culture of vigilance, accountability, and respect, where safeguarding practices are embedded in everyday routines and interactions.

This policy is supported by procedures on supervision, safe premises, child protection practices, safe use of digital technologies, and emergency response.

Definitions

Approved Provider	The legal entity responsible for the operation of the education and care service. At SHARE OOSH, this is the Management Committee.
Nominated Supervisor (NS)	The person designated by the Approved Provider and approved by the Regulatory Authority to be in day-to-day charge of the service.
Responsible Person (RP)	A person placed in day-to-day charge of the service when the Nominated Supervisor is not present.
Educator	Any staff member who provides education and care to children as part of their role at the service.
Child Safe Environment	An environment where all reasonable steps are taken to protect children from harm or hazard, free from smoking, vaping, alcohol, and drugs, and with safe systems in place for supervision, technology use, and incident response.
Personal Device	A privately owned phone, camera, tablet, or similar device. Personal devices must not be used in program spaces except in an emergency.
Service Device	Technology owned by the service. All service devices must have cameras disabled or covered and may only be used for approved administrative or reporting purposes.
Mandatory Reporter	An individual (such as an educator) legally required to report any reasonable suspicion that a child is at risk of abuse or neglect.
Severe Injury Documentation	The exceptional circumstance where a photograph of a child may be taken with prior approval from the Responsible Person and Nominated Supervisor, for the sole purpose of recording a severe injury to meet reporting requirements.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.

2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.
2.2.3	Child safety and protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

3.1.1	Fit for purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including ensuring safety and hazard prevention.
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

QUALITY AREA 4: STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

4.1.1	Organisation of educators	The organisation of educators across the service supports children's safety and wellbeing.
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QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

QUALITY AREA 6: PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

6.2.1	Engagement with families	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in service decisions, ensuring clear communication of safety procedures.
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation.

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
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EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

82	Tobacco, drug, alcohol, vaping-free environment
83	Staff members not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
84	Awareness of child protection law
85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion

101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision of children
168(2)(h)	Policies and procedures to provide a child safe environment
175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

Related Policies

- Child Safe
- Child Safe Reporting
- Interactions with Children
- Behaviour Guidance
- Supervision
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Emergency and Evacuation
- Digital Technologies and Online Environments
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Governance and Management
- Staffing
- All Health and Safety Policies

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that SHARE OOSH provides a safe, healthy and supportive environment where all children are protected from harm. It sets out the service's commitment to creating spaces that are free from hazards and prohibited substances, and to establishing clear expectations for supervision, conduct, and the use of technology.

This policy supports:

- Compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations.
- Consistent practices that protect children's physical and emotional wellbeing in both indoor and outdoor environments.
- A proactive approach to preventing harm, including the management of risks unique to the service's setting.

- The responsible use of technology in a way that safeguards children's privacy and dignity.
- Educator awareness of their legal obligations, including mandatory reporting requirements.
- A culture of vigilance, accountability and continuous improvement in child safety.

Guiding Principles

SHARE OOSH is guided by the following principles in providing a child safe environment:

- **Safe environment** – SHARE maintains facilities and practices that always protect children from harm and hazards.
- **Substance-free service** – The environment is strictly free from smoking, vaping, alcohol and drugs.
- **Technology safety** – Devices are managed responsibly to protect children's privacy and dignity, with strict limits on photography and use of personal devices.
- **Compliance and accountability** – All staff follow regulatory requirements and take shared responsibility for upholding child safe practices.

Procedures

To uphold this policy, SHARE OOSH will implement the following procedures:

1. Safe Premises and Equipment

- Conduct daily indoor and outdoor safety checks before each session, documenting hazards and actions taken.
- Ensure all equipment and furniture is clean, well maintained, and safe for use.
- Remove or isolate any item, area or hazard that poses a risk until it can be repaired or made safe.
- Ensure cleaning materials, chemicals, medications and other dangerous substances are securely stored and inaccessible to children.

2. Substance-Free Environment

- Display clear signage indicating that the service is smoke-free, vape-free, alcohol-free and drug-free.
- Educators, families, visitors and contractors are prohibited from bringing or using vaping devices, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs on the premises or during excursions.

- Any breaches must be immediately reported to the Responsible Person and documented.

3. Technology and Photography

- Company devices must have cameras disabled or covered.
- Personal devices are not permitted for use in program areas, except in the case of an emergency.
- No photographs of children are to be taken under any circumstances, except when prior approval has been given by the Responsible Person and Nominated Supervisor to record a severe injury for reporting purposes.
- Any authorised images taken for incident reporting must be securely stored, attached to the incident record, and deleted immediately once reporting requirements are met.

4. Supervision and Outdoor Safety

- Educators must always maintain sight and sound supervision of children.
- Special consideration is given to SHARE's unfenced outdoor environment; exit points are to be actively monitored and educators positioned to maintain clear sightlines.
- Daily external safety checks of the park and outdoor areas must be completed before children enter, noting hazards and controls in the Daily External Safety Checklist.
- Educators must remain vigilant to risks introduced by members of the public, animals, or environmental hazards, and take immediate action to maintain safety.

5. Mandatory Reporting and Incident Response

- All educators and management are mandatory reporters and must act if they suspect a child is at risk of abuse or significant harm.
- Concerns must be reported immediately to the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person, who will guide next steps in accordance with the Child Safe Reporting Policy.
- Serious incidents, including allegations of abuse or harm, must be notified to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours.
- Families will be informed of incidents in line with Regulation 86.

6. Communication and Accountability

- Families are informed of the service's child safe environment measures through the Family Handbook, enrolment process and ongoing communication.

- Educators are expected to immediately report any unsafe practices, breaches of this policy, or hazards they cannot resolve themselves.
- The Management Committee will review hazard and incident records regularly to identify trends and ensure follow-up actions are completed.

Roles and Responsibilities

ROLE	RESPONSIBLE FOR
Approved Provider	• Ensuring the service has policies and procedures in place that meet legislative requirements for child safety. • Allocating resources to maintain safe premises, equipment, and practices. • Supporting the Nominated Supervisor and Responsible Persons to implement this policy consistently. • Monitoring compliance through regular policy reviews, audits and incident reporting.
Nominated Supervisor	• Leading the implementation of this policy across the service. • Ensuring all educators are aware of their responsibilities regarding child safety, prohibited substances, technology use, and mandatory reporting. • Approving any authorised use of photography to document a severe injury and ensuring images are managed according to policy. • Overseeing incident reports and ensuring notifications are made to the Regulatory Authority within required timeframes. • Monitoring daily safety checks, hazard reports, and follow-up actions.
Responsible Persons	• Acting on behalf of the Nominated Supervisor when on duty. • Ensuring compliance with this policy during their shift, including monitoring supervision, hazard controls, and safe environment practices. • Providing prior approval for authorised photography of a severe injury and ensuring the NS is informed as soon as practically possible. • Responding promptly to reported breaches of the smoke-free, vape-free, drug-free and alcohol-free requirements. • Supporting educators to maintain vigilance in SHARE's unique outdoor environment.
Educators	• Conducting daily safety checks and immediately reporting hazards. • Actively supervising children, including monitoring exits in the outdoor environment.

	• Complying with the prohibition on personal devices in program areas, except in emergencies. • Ensuring no photos of children are taken, unless explicitly authorised for severe injury documentation. • Maintaining awareness of mandatory reporting obligations and escalating concerns immediately to the NS or RP. • Modelling safe practices and reinforcing a culture of vigilance and respect.
Families	• Following service procedures when dropping off or collecting children to ensure safe transitions. • Respecting the service's smoke-free, vape-free, drug-free and alcohol-free environment. • Supporting safe use of technology by ensuring children's personal devices are not brought into the service. • Not taking photos or videos of children while at the service or in public spaces (e.g. the park) where the service is operating, to protect the privacy and safety of all children. • Communicating any safety concerns to educators or management.
Other Staff	• Complying with all service safety requirements and maintaining smoke-free, vape-free, alcohol-free and drug-free conduct while on premises. • Reporting hazards or unsafe conditions to the NS or RP. • Maintaining confidentiality and respecting child safety practices while at the service.
Students/Volunteers	• Following the directions of supervising educators at all times. • Not using personal devices in program areas. • Supporting safe practices and immediately reporting hazards or safety concerns to educators. • Maintaining confidentiality and adhering to the service's child safe practices.

Induction and Ongoing Training

All new staff, volunteers and students are introduced to this policy during induction. Induction includes:

- Child safe environment requirements, including the smoke-free, vape-free, alcohol-free and drug-free policy.
- Prohibition on the use of personal devices in program areas and the conditions for authorised photography of severe injuries.
- Procedures for daily safety checks, hazard reporting, and incident documentation.
- Mandatory reporting responsibilities and how to escalate concerns.

Ongoing training is provided through:

- Regular policy refreshers at team meetings and professional development sessions.
- Updates when legislation, regulations or service practices change.
- Targeted training following incidents or identified gaps in practice.
- Staff sign-off on this policy is recorded at induction and following each review.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review Process

Monitoring

- The Nominated Supervisor and Responsible Persons check daily safety audits, hazard reports, and incident documentation to confirm compliance.
- Educators are expected to report hazards, breaches or unsafe practices immediately, which are logged and followed up by leadership.

Evaluation

- The Management Committee reviews incident, and hazard records each term to identify trends and assess whether risk controls are effective.
- Implementation of this policy is considered during team meetings, reflective practice discussions, and through feedback from staff and families.
- Observations of practice are used to confirm that staff are upholding the vaping ban, technology restrictions, and mandatory reporting responsibilities.

Review

- This policy will be formally reviewed at least every two years, or earlier if:
 - legislation or regulations change,
 - incidents highlight gaps in practice, or
 - sector guidance recommends amendments.
- All staff are consulted in the review process and families are invited to contribute feedback.
- Each review and staff sign-off is documented and endorsed by the Management Committee.