



# O'Connor Cooperative School

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## Policy: **Providing a Child Safe Environment**

Related documents: **Keeping Children and Young People Safe Guidelines**

### **Policy statement**

The preschool staff at O'Connor Cooperative School aim to create an environment that minimises the risk of children being harmed in any way. Staff have a responsibility to all children participating in the preschool program to defend their right to care and protection. To support this right, staff will follow any legal requirements and directorate procedures for dealing with suspected abuse or neglect of children. O'Connor Cooperative School will ensure that all preschool staff undertake appropriate professional learning in this area and have access to support in dealing with child safety issues and concerns.

### **Strategies for policy implementation**

#### **Safety at the preschool site**

- The O'Connor Cooperative School Building Services Officer (BSO) in consultation with the Business Manager and Preschool Team Leader, ensures that the preschool site is free of hazards and all maintenance issues are dealt with promptly and appropriately.
- Preschool staff conduct a daily Indoor Safety check. The BSO conducts a daily Outdoor Safety check. Any hazards are reported immediately to the BSO, Business Manager or Preschool Team Leader.
- Staff attend to minor repairs in a timely manner where appropriate.

#### **Management of visitors and volunteers**

- All visitors and volunteers are required to sign in and out, each time they visit the preschool site. Volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Nomination Form and are bound by the Volunteers Code of Conduct. These forms are kept at the Front Office. Any concerns with the behaviour of visitors or volunteers should immediately be referred to the Preschool Team Leader or another member of the School Leadership Team.
- From November 2013, according to Working with Vulnerable People regulations, regular volunteers will be required to complete a Working with Vulnerable People check. Once completed, volunteers are required to show their card to both the front office, where a copy will be made and placed on file, and in the preschool room.
- Tradespeople who are required to carry out work at a preschool site must first present to the O'Connor Cooperative School Business Manager for an induction meeting. Tradespeople are required to sign in in the Trade Logbook located at the O'Connor Cooperative School front office.
- Health professionals, IT support staff and preservice teachers must sign in at the O'Connor Cooperative School Front Office.

#### **Employment of staff**

- All staff employed at O'Connor Cooperative Preschool meet ACECQA requirements with respect to educational qualifications and have completed a Working with Vulnerable People check. All teacher qualified staff are registered with Teacher Quality Institute in accordance with the requirements for national teacher registration.

#### **Supervision of children**

- At all times children will be in direct line of sight or hearing of an educator. To ensure supervision ratios are consistently maintained, educators will announce to each other if/when they are leaving a particular zone in the preschool environment. This will notify another educator that they are assuming supervision responsibility for a particular zone, such as inside the room or outside in the playground.

- Under no circumstance should a person who is not considered an educator for the purposes of supervision ratio be left alone with children.
- The requirements for supervision ratios may change when engaging in higher risk activities such as excursions. In these circumstances, it is the responsibility of the preschool teacher and Preschool Team Leader to ensure appropriate ratios are planned for and maintained.

#### **Supervision and support of educators**

- Each year, educators undertake training regarding child protection and staff requirements in relation to mandatory reporting.
- *Keeping Children and Young People Safe* Guidelines are provided for all staff.

#### **Children's education and empowerment**

- Educators will foster children's self-esteem and positive self-image through their interactions and relationships with children.
- Educators will encourage children to be assertive (i.e. learn when to stand up for themselves and say no when appropriate), and to communicate their needs and concerns. This may be done through role play, storytelling, puppets, restorative conferences etc.

#### **Information for families**

- Educators will be available to discuss any issues with parents/carers at mutually convenient and suitable times.
- Families will be informed of any changes to the preschool site/program as required and will be encouraged to provide input and feedback.