

Child Safe Environments

Policy Statement

Happy Haven OSHC believes that the welfare of all children is of paramount importance and that the service has an obligation to defend the child's right to care and protection. All employees have a responsibility to take action to protect children they suspect may be abused or neglected. All children have the right to be safe, and the provision of safe environments is essential in preventing injury and enabling them to grow and develop. Our service will carry out its responsibilities and will fulfil our duty of care in responding to abuse and neglect as indicated under legislation under the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017. We will adhere to the DfE policy on Child Protection in Schools, Early Childhood Education and Care Services.

This policy is available at [Child protection in education and early childhood services policy](#)

Strategies:

- The Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 requires educators and volunteers to notify the Child Abuse Report Line (131 478 or online) if they suspect, on reasonable grounds, that a child has been or is being abused or neglected – this responsibility is part of the broad duty of care that educators and volunteers have towards the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- All educators should complete 'Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect Education and Care Training' (RAN-EC) prior to working with children, or, if this is not possible, they will be provided with a copy of 'Protective Practices for Staff in Their Interactions with Children and Young People' https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/protective_practices_for_staff_in_their_interactions_with_children_and_young_people.pdf?v=1596093568 and booked in for the first available RRHAN-EC course – the service will pay for required refresher courses
- 'Mandatory Reporting Guides' are held at the service and must be read and understood by educators – these guidelines will also be available for families
- All educators must undergo the screening and suitability checks in accordance with the DfE requirements
- Employee obligations in relation to allegations of child abuse are included in educators' induction handbook
- Families will be made aware that the employees and work experience students of the service are mandated notifiers under the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017
- If an educator suspects abuse, they should follow guidelines from 'Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect and Education and Care Training'
- Educators are encouraged to discuss any issues or concerns with the Director prior to making a mandated notification
- Educators should remember that it is not their responsibility to prove the abuse, just to have reasonable suspicion that abuse, or neglect has occurred
- Reports will be treated with strict confidentiality
- Educators will leave the situation in the hands of the Child Abuse Report Line once a report has been made – educators will follow the advice given by the Child Abuse Report Line
- In addition to completing the CARL reporting, Happy Haven OSHC also requires Employees to submit a detailed online Happy Haven OSHC Notification.

Change Rooms and Toilets

The service recognises the vulnerability of children while using public toilets, including those on the school site. In developing the following strategies consideration was given to the individual child's right to privacy balanced with the need for children to be safe. The strategies must also guide educators in appropriate levels of supervision so as to protect them.

Child Protection

- Educators will discuss at appropriate times with children safety and protective behaviours, either in groups or individually
- Children must notify educators when they are going to the toilets
- Educators will actively monitor children going to and from the toilets during 0630hrs - 0730hrs and 1700hrs - 1800hrs
- Children will go to the toilets in pairs while at the service
- On excursions children are encouraged to go to the toilet in groups
- Where the toilet is some distance from the rest of the group and/or not in line of sight an educator will walk them to the toilet and wait outside the toilet block until all children have returned. They will then walk back together
- When on excursion and children are required to get changed into other clothing, educators will supervise this area sensitively, and ensuring children have privacy
- When children need to get changed, educators will check the toilet/ change room area prior to children entering and determine the area as being safe
- Educators (preferably of the same gender) will stand by at the entrance of the toilets and watch comings and goings of children and the public
- Educators will enter the change room and scan the area looking for any problems and inappropriate behaviours, and manage them.

Educator Protection

- Educators will wherever possible use designated adult toilets
- Where this is not possible educators will notify the Responsible Person on duty that they are going to the toilet and on their return. If using the same toilets as the children, male educators must not use the urinal but instead use the cubical
- On excursions where children are required to change, both male and female educators will be rostered wherever possible to monitor change rooms. Where it is not possible for both genders to be represented on such an excursion, an educator will walk the non-represented gendered children to their change rooms and will wait at the door. Should it be necessary for them to enter the toilets if an emergency arises, they will knock on the door and announce they are entering
- On swimming excursions or when educators are required to get changed using the same change rooms as the children, educators will get changed either before or after the children are sent into the change room to get changed
- If a child asks an educator for assistance changing, educators can assist. Depending on the child's age and abilities, this will determine the extent of assistance that can be provided

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- Where educators are asked by a child to assist, the educator will ensure that they are in the change room area (e.g. not in a cubical) and another educator and/or children where possible, is present in the area.

Other Relevant Documents:

- Policy Duty of Care
- Policy Interactions with Children
- Policy Supervision of Children
- Policy Excursions
- Policy Child Safe Environments
- SOP Toilet Runs on Excursions
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References:

Department for Education South Australia (February 2021), *Child protection in schools and early childhood services policy*, accessed on 7 October 2021,

https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/child_protection_in_schools_early_childhood_education_and_care_policy.pdf?acsf_files_redirect

Department for Education South Australia (July 2021), *RRHAN-EC mandatory notification training - list of courses*, accessed on 7 October 2021,

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/rrhan-ec/rrhan-ec-mandatory-notification-training-list-courses>

Department for Education South Australia (October 2020), *Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people guidelines for staff working or volunteering in education or care settings*, accessed on 7 October 2021,

https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/protective_practices_for_staff_in_their_interactions_with_children_and_young_people.pdf?v=1596093568

Government of South Australia (August 2021), *Children and young people (safety) act 2017*, accessed on 7 October 2021,

[https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/CHILDREN%20AND%20YOUNG%20PEOPLE%20\(SAFETY\)%20ACT%202017/CURRENT/2017.25.AUTH.PDF](https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/CHILDREN%20AND%20YOUNG%20PEOPLE%20(SAFETY)%20ACT%202017/CURRENT/2017.25.AUTH.PDF)

Government of South Australia, *Mandated notifiers and their role*, accessed on 7 October 2021,

<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse/mandated-notifiers-and-their-role>

Government of South Australia, *Reporting child abuse*, accessed on 7 October 2021,

<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>

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Part 4.2 Children's Health and Safety, Division 1, 84 – Awareness of child protection law

Part 4.3 Physical environment, Division 1, 109 – Toilet and hygiene facilities

Part 4.3 Physical environment, Division 2, 115 – Premises designed to facilitate supervision

Part 4.7 Governance and leadership, Division 2, 168 – Education and care service must have policies and procedures

