



**WHEELERS HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL
OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE**

Physical Environment Policy

The physical environment can contribute to children’s wellbeing, happiness, and creativity as well as promoting the development of independence. The choices made in an Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) program about resources, materials, spaces, layout, air, and light in combination with access to a range of experiences in the indoor and outdoor areas, have a direct impact on the quality of learning opportunities available to children.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child’s wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s needs for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.1.3	Healthy Lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
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, practiced and implemented.

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 supporting the access of every child.
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
73	Educational programs
75	Information about the educational program to be kept available
76	Information about educational program to be given to parents
80	Weekly menu
81	Sleep and rest
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol -free environment
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
98	Telephone or other communication equipment
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
102	Authorisation for excursions
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
104	Fencing and security
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
107	Space requirements—indoor
108	Space requirements—outdoor space
109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
110	Ventilation and natural light
111	Administrative space
113	Outdoor space—natural environment
114	Outdoor space—shade
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
123	Educator to child ratios- centre based services
156	Relationships in groups
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures are to be followed

PURPOSE

Our OSHC Program will ensure the environment is safe, clean, and well maintained for children, families, educators, and visitors. Children's awareness of the environment and sustainable practice will be supported through daily practices, resources and interactions. The physical environment will support children's participation and engagement, development, learning, and safety, and will provide supervised access to positive experiences and inclusive relationships. Our OSHC Program provides an environment free from the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, educators, Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, management and visitors of the OSHC program.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Program is committed to providing an environment that promotes safety and enhances children's learning and development.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER, NOMINATED SUPERVISOR AND EDUCATORS' RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

Physical environment is designed to:

- maximise children's engagement and positive experiences
- provide space where children can experience quality care in a safe and healthy environment
- meet licensing requirements for buildings, space requirements, fencing, light, ventilation, firefighting equipment, emergency evacuation exits and safety glass for National Regulations, the Building Code of Australia (BCA)
- provide adequate storage to meet the needs and requirements of the program
- provide sufficient and accessible handwashing and toileting
- ensure toileting and hand-washing facilities are accessible from both the indoor and outdoor environments
- provide appropriate areas for food preparation
- provide an area for managerial purposes, consultation with children's parents and for private conversations to occur (Reg. 111)

- incorporate natural and artificial lighting, appropriate ventilation, heating, cooling and fresh air into the building/premises (Reg. 110)
- facilitate adequate supervision of children at all times
- ensure safety and minimal disruption for children whilst playing
- ensure immediate communication is available at all times to and from parents and emergency services (Reg. 98)
- provide different types of play to occur both in the indoor and outdoor areas (e.g., quiet play areas and loud play areas)
- provide shade in the form of trees or physical shade structures
- provide a natural environment for children to explore and experience which may include plants, trees, gardens, rock, mud and/or water
- ensure all required fencing is compliant with current regulations and is maintained to ensure it is in good condition (including boundary fencing)
- provide a variety of indoor and outdoor experiences, catering for children's interests and abilities
- provide a developmentally appropriate environment where children can explore, solve problems, create, construct and engage in critical thinking
- provide an environment that permits children to participate in activities independently or in small groups, and access resources autonomously

CHOOSING APPROPRIATE RESOURCES AND EQUIPMENT

- appropriately sized furniture and equipment will be provided in both the indoor and outdoor environment for the age ranges represented in the OSHC program
- resources will be adequate in number for the number of children attending our Program and be developmentally appropriate
- children will be supported to access appropriate furniture, resources, materials, toys and equipment that encourage appropriate challenges and risk taking in accordance with their individual developmental level
- specific equipment requirements of children with additional needs will be catered for to ensure an inclusive environment
- resources and equipment will be chosen to reflect the cultural diversity of the Program's community and the cultural diversity of contemporary Australia, including the incorporation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community

- educators will provide ideas for equipment and materials purchase based on the needs and interests of children attending the OSHC program
- educators will notify the Nominated Supervisor of equipment that needs maintenance and add it to the school maintenance book
- children's ideas and suggestions in planning the indoor and outdoor environments will be encouraged
- children will be encouraged to make decisions about the use of equipment and resources
- incorporate commercial, natural, recycled, homemade, and real resources that can be used in a variety of ways to encourage children's learning and creativity
- educators will participate in on-going professional development in order to enhance children's learning and ensuring a safe and educational environment

REST ENVIRONMENT

- educators will adhere to our *Rest Time Policy*
- provide an area/environment for children to rest and relax

REARRANGING, ADDING OR REMOVING FURNITURE

- use the Quality Improvement plan to record any changes that are made to the physical environment of the OSHC Program, such as rearranging of rooms etc. to show continuous improvement and document links to children's learning/programming and choice of resources and equipment

ONGOING MAINTENANCE

- regular checks of the indoor and outdoor environment will be conducted in order to minimise risk and hazards
- educators will complete an *Outdoor Environment and Playground Safety Audit* yearly
- the Nominated Supervisor will document required maintenance in the school's maintenance book as required.

CLEANING OF BUILDINGS, PREMISES, FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

GENERAL CLEANING

- the program will use structured cleaning schedules to ensure that all cleaning is carried out regularly and thoroughly

- educators will clean the program at the end of each day and throughout the day as needed
- accidents and spills will be cleaned up as quickly as possible to ensure that the program always maintains a high level of cleanliness and hygiene.
- educators will adhere to our *Health and Safety Policy*.

WHEN PURCHASING, STORING AND/OR USING ANY DANGEROUS CHEMICALS, SUBSTANCES, MEDICINES OR EQUIPMENT, OUR OSHC SERVICE WILL:

- ensure all procedures are followed to maintain a safe environment
- ensure all hazardous chemicals are stored safely away from children
- adhere at all times to manufacturer's advice and instructions when using products to clean furniture and equipment at the program
- keep a register of all hazardous chemicals, substances used at the Program.

CHILDREN'S BATHROOM

- children will be actively supervised whilst accessing toilet facilities to ensure other children are safe from harm
- educators will encourage children to follow appropriate hygiene practices- hand washing, not playing in bathrooms.
- bathrooms will be cleaned at least daily and at other times as required
- bathroom floors will be mopped at least daily

MAINTENANCE OF FIRE EQUIPMENT

- all fire equipment at our OSHC Program will be maintained as per the legal standards by the school
- external agencies will be employed to assist the School with this maintenance

SUN PROTECTION

- the OSHC Program will adhere to our *Sun Safety Policy* and procedures at all times
- a combination of sun protection measures will be implemented whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above
- educators will continue to check the UV rating prior to going outdoors and as the heat increases throughout the day (see *Sun Safety Policy* for further information)

- temperature of outdoor equipment and surfaces including Fake Turf, will be monitored during the day to ensure the area and equipment is safe for children to play

SERVICE CLOSURE

- educator/s are to check the entire premises to ensure that all children and families have departed by checking sign in and out sheets
- educator/s must sign the sign in and out sheets confirming all children are signed out
- educator/s are to follow program closing procedures each night
- in the case where a parent has omitted to sign their child out, and the educators did not witness the child leave the Program, the educator/s must take every step to get in contact with the parent to ensure the child has safely left the OSHC Program
- if unable to contact the family, the educators are to contact other educators present on that day for confirmation that the child has been collected. The Nominated Supervisor is to then be notified before leaving the Program.
- all visitors to the OSHC must sign in upon arrival and sign out when they leave
- details of absences during the day must also be recorded.

RELATED POLICIES

Animal and Pet Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Educational Program Policy Environmentally Responsible Policy Health and Safety Policy	Road Safety Policy Rest Time Policy Safe Storage of Hazardous Chemicals Policy Sun Safety Policy Water Safety Policy Work Health and Safety Policy
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SOURCE

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
 Cancer Council NSW: <https://www.cancercouncil.com.au>
 Cancer Council Australia. Be SunSmart. <https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/be-sunsmart>
[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011).
 Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).
 Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2020).
 KidSafe Australia: <https://kidsafe.com.au>

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013). *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*.

NSW Government *Kids and Traffic Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program*

Red nose Safe environment <https://rednose.org.au/section/safe-environment>

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Swimming Pools Act 1992 (NSW)

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Review

Policy Reviewed	School Council approval date	Next Review Date
July 2023		July 2025