



# Star of the Sea School

OSHC  
*Child Safe Environment Policy*

*Open Hearts Open Minds*



## **Child Safe Environment Policy**

### **SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT**

Our school is built on the core values of respect, inclusivity, compassion, collaboration and honesty. We support our families as the first and foremost educators of their child's faith development. Our vision paves the way for educating students for the 21st century but also draws from our history and tradition.

We guide our learners to be self-managed, innovative and critical thinkers who have a strong sense of who they are and their relationship in their world. As a learning community, we value the skills necessary to build meaningful relationships and for learners to be connected to each opportunity to develop their own personal growth. We encourage our learners to question, explore and discover so they actively contribute to a more compassionate society.

### **PURPOSE**

At Star of the Sea School, we believe that safety is a fundamental human right and an essential foundation for learning and growth. In our Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) service, we are committed to ensuring that every child feels emotionally and physically safe at all times.

While families hold the primary responsibility for ensuring a child's safety and wellbeing, our service is deeply committed to playing an active and supportive role in upholding this responsibility. We achieve this through our commitment to creating a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment for every child.

Guided by Gospel values of justice, dignity, and respect for each individual, our policy is also shaped by our obligations within the broader legal and community context in which Catholic schools operate. We are committed to meeting all legislative requirements to safeguard the wellbeing of every child in our care.

### **BACKGROUND**

All children have the right to feel and be safe at home, at school, and within their OSHC environment. It is the responsibility of all staff and management to actively create and maintain environments that are physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe. Providing a safe and supportive setting is critical to preventing harm and promoting each child's healthy growth, development, and wellbeing. Our service upholds a clear duty of care to ensure every child is protected and nurtured while in our care.

## POLICY STATEMENT

At Star of the Sea OSHC, we are deeply committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and healthy environment where all children can grow, thrive, and feel protected. Our educators and staff recognise their fundamental duty of care and are dedicated to upholding every child's right to safety, care, and protection.

To uphold this commitment, our service strictly adheres to the procedures outlined in the *Children's Protection Act 1993*, Section 11(1) and (2), particularly in relation to responding to any allegations of abuse or neglect. We take all concerns seriously and are proactive in ensuring that the wellbeing and safety of every child remain our highest priority.

## NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS

QA 2 <i>Children's Health and Safety</i>	2.2	Each child is protected
	2.2.1	Every precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury
	2.2.3	Management, Educators and employees are aware of their roles and responsibilities to respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect
QA 7 <i>Governance</i>	7.1	Governance supports the operation of a quality service
	7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable effective management and operation of a quality service

## EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

<i>Children (Education and Care Services) National Law</i>	84	Awareness of Child Protection Law
	273	Course in Child Protection

## RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES

Child Safe Policy	Interactions with Children
Staffing Policy	Excursion Policy
Confidentiality Policy	Philosophy

## IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Our Service is committed to providing a safe, clean, and well-maintained environment for children. To support this, an annual self-assessment process is conducted to monitor and maintain the quality of the premises, furniture, and equipment. This ensures that:

- Indoor environments are well-ventilated, receive ample natural light, and are maintained at a comfortable temperature to support children's wellbeing.
- Toilet, handwashing, and drying facilities are developmentally appropriate, safely designed, and conveniently located to allow easy access from both indoor and outdoor play areas.
- The service is equipped with appropriate facilities for the safe handling, preparation, storage, and disposal of food and beverages, in line with hygiene and safety standards.
- Staffing levels and room design support the ability to effectively supervise all areas used by children throughout the day.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY: SUPERVISION

Educators will apply their professional judgment when supervising children, adhering to required OSHC child-to-adult ratios. The level and intensity of supervision will be determined by:

- The level of risk associated with the activity or experience;
- The age, developmental stage, and capabilities of the children;
- The location of the experience (e.g., school-based or offsite).

Our service ensures:

- Children are effectively supervised at all times;
- Educators consistently monitor children's health, wellbeing, and safety;
- The Toilet Supervision Procedure is followed at all times;
- Visitors to the service are closely monitored and are not permitted to supervise children alone;
- No visitor or external adult is ever left unsupervised with children;
- Educators are familiar with authorised collection arrangements for each child;
- If an educator must step away from active supervision, another educator will assume responsibility to ensure continuous supervision.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY: TOBACCO, DRUG, AND ALCOHOL-FREE ENVIRONMENT

Our service ensures:

- A safe, healthy, and substance-free environment for all children;
- All educators, staff, and volunteers are free from the influence of alcohol while on duty;
- All educators, staff, and volunteers are not under the influence of any drug that may impair their ability to educate and care for children;
- The service upholds a clear standard prohibiting the use or influence of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol while on the premises or during service operations.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY: CHILD PROTECTION

(Refer to the Star of the Sea OSHC Child Protection Policy for further detail.)

Our Service ensures:

- All adults working or volunteering in children's programs complete Criminal History Screening;
- As required by the Children's Protection Act 1993, all staff and volunteers must report suspected abuse or neglect to the Child Abuse Report Line (131 478);
- All educators and staff complete Responding to Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care training (RRHAN-EC) prior to working with children or are provided with Protective Practices guidelines;
- Mandatory Reporting Guidelines are accessible to all educators, the Approved Provider, Advisory Committee, and families;
- Educator handbooks outline obligations relating to child protection and reporting responsibilities, particularly for new staff;
- The service pays for required training on child protection and mandatory reporting;
- Families are informed that all educators, volunteers, and the nominated supervisor are mandated notifiers under the Act.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY: VISITORS TO THE PREMISES

(Refer also to our Collection & Delivery Policy.)

Our Service ensures:

- Any unknown individual entering the premises must present identification and state their purpose;
- Only authorised individuals listed on a child's record may collect them. Staff will contact parents if an unauthorised person attempts collection;
- No visitor will be left alone with children at any time;
- All visitors must sign in and out, present identification, and wear a visitor badge while onsite;
- Regular visitors, such as external service providers or entertainers, must hold a current police clearance;
- Staff supervise and monitor all visitors during their time on the premises;
- Toilets and other key areas are regularly checked to ensure safety and security.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY: ANIMALS IN THE SERVICE

While not essential to the program, animals can offer valuable learning experiences and foster respect for the natural world. Their inclusion will be carefully considered by educators, weighing benefits against potential risks.

Our service ensures:

- Children's allergies are reviewed before animals are brought onsite;
- Children follow hygiene procedures after contact with animals;
- Animals are kept away from food preparation and consumption areas;
- Animals are maintained in clean, healthy conditions and provided appropriate care;
- All interactions with animals are supervised;
- Children and adults treat animals humanely and with respect at all times.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY: DANGEROUS PRODUCTS

Our service ensures:

- Preference is given to non-toxic, environmentally friendly products;
- Hazardous or toxic substances are stored securely in a locked cupboard with accompanying Safety Data Sheets;
- Cleaning products and chemicals are kept out of children's reach and used in accordance with safety procedures.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY: IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL HAZARDS

Educators are responsible for conducting regular safety checks to identify, assess, and mitigate hazards.

Steps include:

1. Identifying hazards that may cause illness or injury;
2. Assessing associated risks;
3. Implementing strategies to eliminate or control the risk.
- 4.

Our service is committed to:

- Maintaining active supervision of all children at all times;
- Designing and organising environments to support safe, active supervision;
- Employing effective supervision techniques to reduce injury risk;
- Supporting educators to identify when children's play needs redirection;
- Implementing consistent, proactive supervision strategies;
- Increasing supervision and staff ratios where high-risk experiences are identified;
- Assessing and planning for safety during all activities, especially those deemed high-risk.
- Educators share collective responsibility and accountability for ensuring policies, procedures, and safety practices are implemented consistently across the service.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND APPROVAL

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students, and the broader school community and was approved on \_\_\_\_\_.

## REVISION RECORD

Implemented	November 2024
Ratified by School Board	
Last Reviewed	25 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Next Review	June 2026