

# Operations Plan



## Section 1. Service Management

### Document Review

These policies and procedures will be reviewed annually.

Last Review Date: July 2013	Reviewed by: Director, Management, Employees, Families, Interested Parties
Next Review Date: January 2014 (or as necessary)	



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## 1 Governance & Management of the Service (POLC-001)

The Stuart Park Child Care Centre is a community based, not-for-profit service. Management consists of families who use the facilities and a committee that is elected once a year at the Annual General Meeting. As a Service who participates in the National Ratings and Assessment procedure, parents are able to obtain full childcare assistance.

Under the National Law, Stuart Park Neighbourhood and Child Care Centre is granted Provider Approval and must apply for Service Approval through Quality Education and Care NT (QECNT) in order to operate the education and care service.

Provider Approval No.	PR-0001282
Service Approval No.	SE-0002576

### Related Procedures & Forms

Not Applicable	
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### 1.1 Service Capacity

The Service has 59 approved places for children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years. The Service maintains carer to child ratios in accordance with the Education and Care National Regulations.

### 1.2 Operational Hours

The Service opening hours are from 7.30 am to 5.30 pm Monday to Friday, excluding Public Holidays and one week over the Christmas/New Year period (from December 25<sup>th</sup> to January 1<sup>st</sup>). Care is offered on a full-time or part-time basis. There is no restriction on hours used within the booked hours. The service also offers casual care when available.

- Full time care consists of up to ten (10) hours per day or fifty (50) hours per week.
- Part time consists of a full day(s) of up to ten (10) hours, for up to 4 days.

If children are left after hours a late fee will be imposed. Refer to the Payment of Fees policy.

### 1.3 Operational Plan Development & Review

The Service aims to provide effective and efficient management and delivery of quality childcare services through the ongoing development and review of policies and best practice. Management will ensure that all stakeholders are aware of relevant policies and have free access to all policies.

Management will ensure that all required policies under the Education and Care National Regulations are developed and maintained in consultation with relevant stakeholders.



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Other policies will be developed and reviewed as deemed necessary by the educator and management, based on the following criteria:

- An issue or problem arises that is not addressed in a current policy.
- A current policy is not meeting the current need.
- Daily operations of the Service are unclear to educator, parents or management.
- Educators, parents or management are unsure of what to do in a certain situation.
- There have been changes due to outside influences, such as legislative changes.

## **1.3.1 Policy Access**

All policies must reflect the current philosophy of the Service and include date of endorsement and date of review. Policies will be kept in an accessible location available to educators, parents and relevant stakeholders.

## **1.3.2 Policy Input**

Management will ensure that any new committee members, educators or families joining the Service are made aware of the Operations Plan and any specific policies relevant to them. Any persons involved in the Service are to feel welcome to make suggestions and discuss any concerns that they may have regarding current policies with management. Parents and educators will be informed of this opportunity on enrolment or commencement of employment through the Service's orientation process.

Educators, management, families and any other relevant persons will be encouraged to have input into the development, review or changes to any policies and where appropriate, will be involved in the development of these policies.

## **1.3.3 Policy Review**

The Service will ensure that parents of children enrolled are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure. All existing policies will be reviewed on an annual basis and more frequently if the need arises. The review of policies will be based on the following criteria:

- Is the policy operating effectively?
- Does it include appropriate responses to individual incidents?
- Does it meet the needs of all involved in the Service?
- Does it meet the aims and objectives as outlined?
- Is it consistent with current philosophy?
- Is it consistent with current legislation, acts and standards?
- Does it represent current practice?



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## **1.4 Management Structure**

The business of the Service must be managed by or under the direction of a Management Committee.

The Committee consists of the President, Vice president, Treasurer, Secretary, Nominated Supervisor and 4 other general members. These roles are elected yearly at the Annual General Meeting. Additionally the Committee must appoint one committee member to be the Association's public officer.

Information regarding the roles of individual committee members is available in the Committee Handbook and the Constitution of the Association, available on request.

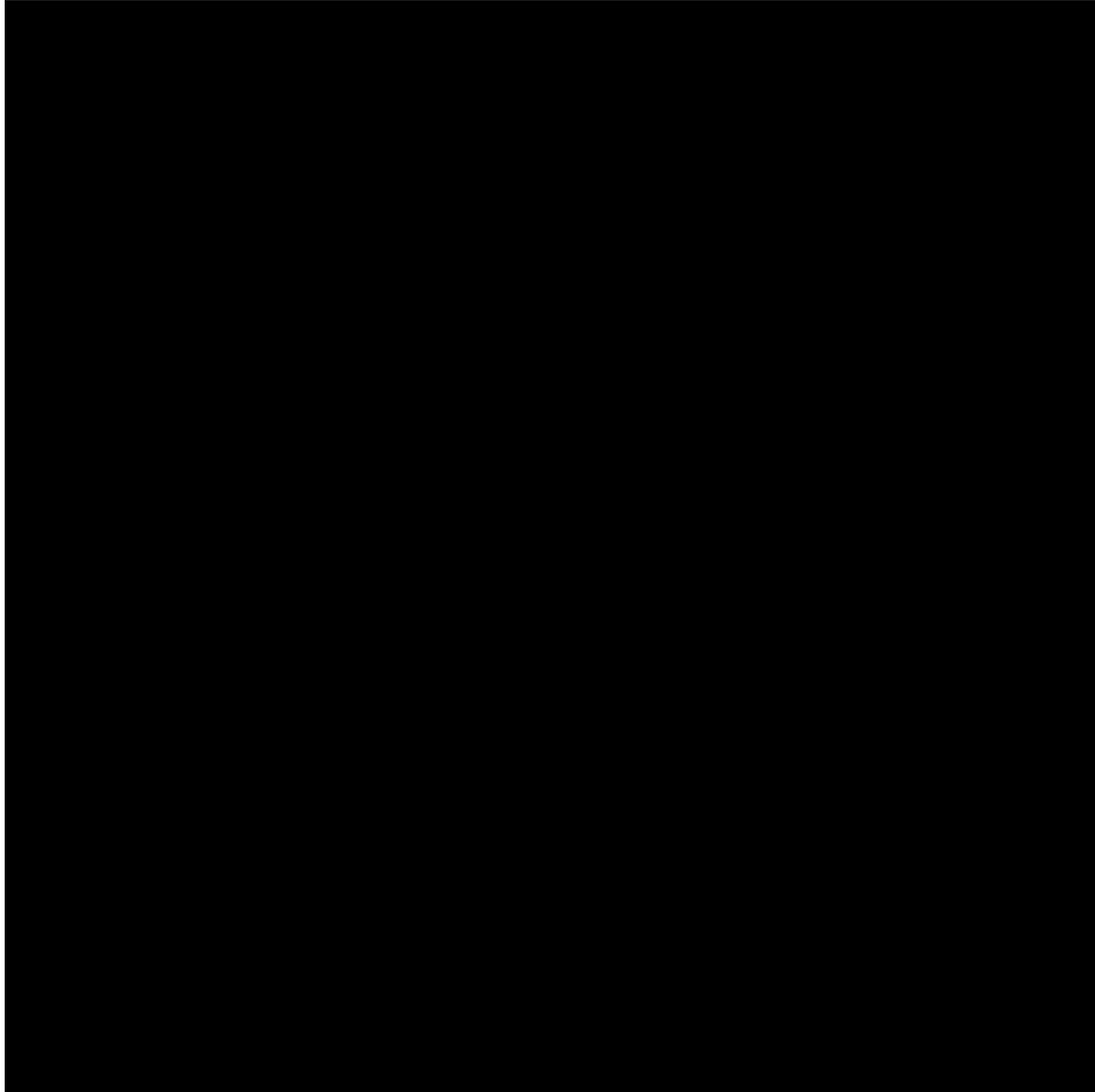
The building from which the Service operates is owned by the City of Darwin. They undertake repairs and maintenance of the building and provide grant funding to XXXXXXXX.

Grants for service delivery are also provided by the Northern Territory Government and Commonwealth Government. The Service also applies for other grants from time to time for specific projects or programs.



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## **1.4.1 Committee Member Responsibilities**

- To familiarise yourself with the Operational Plan and Constitution of the Service, which includes our obligations to government and sponsor bodies.
- To understand and support the philosophies and policies of the Service.
- To maintain confidentiality.
- To attend meetings regularly, be an active participant, share in the decision-making process and the work load.
- To respect the needs and rights of paid educators.
- To abide by the decisions of the committee.
- To be reliable and carry out tasks when promised.
- To be realistic about the commitments you make to the committee and the time you have available.



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- To speak up if you feel concerned or confused, over/under worked.

## **1.4.2 Committee Member Rights as a Volunteer**

- To be listened to and have your ideas and opinions respected.
- To be free of excessive demands on your time and energy.
- To be provided with up-to-date information and resources by the Service's educator in order to make informed decisions.
- To be provided with support, information and clear directions from the educator of State/Federal Government funding bodies and our Sponsor organisation.

## **1.4.3 Legal Responsibilities of Committee**

The Management Committee has a responsibility to ensure that a range of legal requirements are fulfilled. These are determined by a range of Federal and Territory legislation and the requirements of our own constitution. From time to time you may need to refer to:

- The Constitution of the Association.
- The Associations Act.
- The Audit Act.
- The Anti-Discrimination Act (NT), 1992.
- The Privacy Act.
- Legislation Relating to Employment (NT and/or Federal):
  - Long Service Leave Act.
  - Workplace Health and Safety Act.
  - Care and Protection of Children's (NT) Act (2007).
  - Children's Services Award 2010.
  - Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act.
  - The Education and Care National Law and Regulations.
  - Workers Rehabilitation & Compensation Act.

Copies of Acts can be obtained from the Government Information Office. Some may be found in libraries or online and are available at the Service.

## **1.4.4 Financial Responsibilities of Committee**

The Management Committee has responsibility to ensure that the organisation complies with the requirements of government funding and that government requirements for accountability are met. The Service receives funding from the Northern Territory Government while the Commonwealth administers the Family Assistance program.

To ensure requirements are met the committee will:

- Develop and monitor an annual budget
- Regularly monitor income and expenditure
- Ensure that there is an annual audit





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- Take out appropriate insurances (i.e. public liability)

## **1.5 National Quality Framework**

The Service participates in the National Quality Framework (NQF). The Service aims to provide the highest quality education and care available across all areas of this framework.

The Service participates in and values the NQF, including the National Quality Standard (NQS), the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the National Regulations – an Australian Government initiative linked to the funding of the Child Care Benefit for parents. This is conducted through the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) and Quality Education and Care NT, through scheduled site assessment visits and where appropriate, spontaneous visits.

The NQS provides standards of quality practices for care provided in our Service as well as guidance and support from the Service’s self-evaluation through our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The system also allows educators to continually improve practices by identifying the quality aspects of care the Service is already providing and assisting the Service in developing goals for further improvement through our QIP. The Service is required to complete and submit a comprehensive QIP every twelve months.

The Service will ensure that all educators and management are informed about current practices and requirements in the NQF process by attending appropriate in-service/training, accessing any other publications and information about the accreditation process that may be of benefit – including those published by ACECQA.

Educators will involve parents, families and management in each stage of the assessment process to seek their input and views into practices and care in the Service. This includes having parent input into policy reviews, parent meetings and providing updates in newsletters about the Service’s current stage in the process.



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## **The seven Standards under the NQS are:**

1. Educational program and practice.
2. Children's health and safety.
3. Physical environment.
4. Educating arrangements.
5. Relationships with children.
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities.
7. Leadership and service management.

## **The NQS Ratings are as follows:**

- Excellent
- Exceeding National Quality Standard.
- Meeting National Quality Standard.
- Working towards National Quality Standard.
- Significant improvement required.

The Service will access regular updates on the ACECQA website – [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)



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## 2 Enrolment & Orientation of Children (POLC-002)

Enrolment at the Service is open to all children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years that are not attending a primary school. The Nominated Supervisor may also consider requests to enrol a child between 6 weeks and 6 months of age based on the needs of that child, the family and the ability of the Service to provide appropriate care for the child.

### Related Procedures & Forms

FORM-001	Enrolment Record
FORM-0041	Family Orientation Checklist

### 2.1 Child Groupings

The Service has allocated child groupings as follows:

Age of Child	Number of Children	Number of Educator
6 weeks - 24 months	8	1 full time equivalent Qualified Diploma 1 full time equivalent Certificate III
24 months - 3 years	18	2 full time equivalent Qualified Diploma 2 full time equivalent Certificate III
3 years - 6 years	33	2 full time equivalent Qualified Diploma 1 full time equivalent Certificate III
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>9</b>

### 2.2 Priority Enrolment

The Service ensures vacant places are filled in accordance with the following Federal Government's Priority of Access guidelines:

Priority 1	A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
Priority 2	A child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work, training, study test under section 14 of the Part A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act.
Priority 3	Any other child.



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Within these main categories, priority should also be given to the following children:

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
- Children in families which include a disabled person.
- Children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold or whose partner is on income support.
- Children in families with a non-English speaking background.
- Children in socially isolated families.
- Children of single parents.

Requests for priority 1 or 2 enrolment status may require evidence to support the claim, particularly in the event that a Priority 3 child needs to vacate a place to make room for a child with a higher priority. Parents will need to acknowledge and accept these conditions as set out in the Priority of Access guidelines at the time of enrolment. In the event that a place needs to be vacated it will be done in a last on first off basis and parents will be given at least 14 days' notice.

Any change in circumstances will need to be provided to the Service. A change in occupation may warrant a reassessment of care time available at the Service. However any decrease in care resulting from such a change should allow for a suitable period of transition and not preclude a parent's opportunity to seek other occupations.

The Service may require a Priority 3 child to vacate a place to make room for a child with a higher priority. The Service can only do so if you:

- Are notified when your child first entered care that the Service follows this policy.
- Are given at least 14 days' notice of the need for your child to vacate.

## 2.3 Service Preference Enrolment

The Service will comply with the Federal Government's guidelines for Priority of Access. However, the Service will give preference in order of the following:

Preference 1	A child of an employee of the Service.
Preference 2	A child that has siblings currently attending the Service.
Preference 3	A child of a suitable age group who has expressed interest in enrolment.

## 2.4 Enrolment Request

Once a suitable place becomes available and is accepted by a family, they are invited to spend time at the Service to familiarise themselves with the educators, routines and programs. On enrolment an orientation process will take place at a suitable time and will include the provision of the Parent Handbook. The Enrolment Record (FORM-001) will be completed at this time.



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## 2.5 Orientation for Enrolled Children

An educator will be allocated to go through the Family Orientation checklist (FORM-041) at a suitable time, which will include relevant policies and procedures. Enrolling families are invited and encouraged to:

- Visit and become familiar with the service before their child starts.
- Talk with the nominated supervisor and educators about the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning.
- Share information about other child-related services accessed by the family.
- Share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs.
- Work with educators to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child.

The Service will support families for whom literacy is an issue or for whom English is not a first language, this may include organising a translator.

At all times during the enrolment and orientation process open communication is encouraged between all parties.

## 2.6 Unenrolled Children Policy

On occasion, children who are not enrolled at the Service may be present. An example of this is when families come to pick up an enrolled child and they bring their other children with them.

At times like this, the children who are not enrolled at the Service are the responsibility of the adult that brought them. This is to ensure our legal requirements including child/educator ratios are met.

Should a child who is not enrolled at the Service attend an excursion with the service, they may only attend should the adult to educator ratio not be compromised for enrolled children.



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## 3 Payment of Fees (POLC-003)

As a not-for-profit organisation, the Service undertakes to keep fees at the minimum amount required to provide a quality child care service. Any surplus monies will be used for improving facilities and the service provided.

A list of current fees is displayed on the notice board located in the foyer. The fee system is designed for simplicity and fairness and to cover all budgeted costs.

As an additional incentive to attract and retain quality educators, those educator that have children enrolled at the Service will be provided with a 25% discount on the child care fee set by the Management Committee.

### Related Procedures & Forms

FORM-002	Fee Payment Agreement
FORM-003	Late Fee Payment

### 3.1 Setting Fees

Fees are to be set on an annual basis by management, based on the annual budget and ensuring that the required income will be received to run the service efficiently. This is subject to change at discretion of the committee. Parents will be given at least 2 weeks' notice of any changes in the fees.

Fees are payable for fifty one (51) weeks of the year whilst a child is enrolled with the Service. This includes Public Holidays, annual and sick leave. The Service is closed for the week December 25<sup>th</sup> to January 1<sup>st</sup> and no charge will apply for this period.

#### 3.1.1 Child Care Benefit

The service complies with the Commonwealth Government requirements to be an eligible Child Care Benefit service. The guidelines in claiming and administering the Child Care Benefit, as directed in the Child Care Service Handbook 2011-2012, are followed.

In order to be eligible for the Commonwealth Child Care Benefit, the Service participates in the Ratings and Assessment process through ACECQA to ensure that National Quality Standards are met.

All children must meet the Government's immunisation requirements, or have approved exemption, to be eligible for the Child Care Benefit. Records of each child's immunisation status must be provided on enrolment and updated when boosters are administered. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the records held at the Service are up to date.

Applications for reduced fees through the Child Care Benefit (CCB) are obtained from the Family Assistance Office. Full fees are applied for enrolled hours until notification is received of the Child Care Benefit percentage. Once this has been received, fees will be adjusted to the date applicable. The Service cannot back date rebates for families already using care.



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Families will only be eligible for the Child Care Benefit if childcare attendance records are accurately completed and signed by the parent/guardian or other responsible adult, and other eligibility requirements are met. (*Refer to Child Care Service Handbook – 10.3*)

Child Care Benefit is paid for up to 42 allowable absence days for each child per financial year across all approved care (*Refer to Child Care Service Handbook – 13.1*).

The Service undertakes to keep parents informed of any changes to the Child Care Benefit scheme as they become available. For information regarding individual Child Care Benefit payments you will need to contact the Family Assistance Office.

## 3.2 Paying Fees

Fees are payable two (2) weeks in advance on commencement of care. A Fee Payment Agreement (FORM-002) is to be completed by the person responsible for the child in care. Fees can be paid weekly, fortnightly or monthly but must be kept up to date.

Fees are to be paid for the days the child is booked into the Service, including times when the child is absent due to illness or holidays and for public holidays.

Fees can be paid Monday – Friday between the hours of 8.00am-5.30pm. Cash, cheque or EFTPOS facilities are available, however the preferred method is electronic funds transfer.

A dated statement will be issued regularly showing any monies paid. It is the parent’s responsibility to collect these from their parent pocket. Parents may access fee statements / information at any time by providing a written request to the Nominated Supervisor.

All records will be kept confidential and stored appropriately.

### 3.2.1 Overdue Fees

Parents are encouraged to discuss any difficulties that they may have in paying fees with the Nominated Supervisor who will then make suitable arrangements for payment of fees as well as informing them of other avenues for financial support if available.

If no previous arrangements have been made regarding overdue fees the Nominated Supervisor/Committee member will:

After 2 weeks overdue	Send a reminder statement requesting payment.
After 3 weeks overdue	A phone call will be made requesting payment and an appointment made to discuss the problem with the option of setting up a payment plan
After 4 weeks overdue	Children’s care arrangements may be in jeopardy. Any outstanding payments not received will be forwarded to a debt collection agency and the cost of recovery added to the account.



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## 3.2.2 Late Collection Fee

Any parent who collects their children after 5.30pm will be charged a Late Fee Payment (FORM-003) as set by management.

The clock located in the foyer will be the only clock used to record late fee time.

0 - 15 minutes late	Charge of \$20.00
16 - 30 minutes late	Charge of \$40.00
Over 30 minutes	Charge of \$60.00
Over 60 minutes	Police will be contacted in accordance with the Service's Delivery and Collection of Children Policy. Every endeavour will be made to contact parents and emergency contacts in the first instance.

Wherever possible parents should advise the Service when they will be late to collect their child. Parents will then be asked to sign the late fee document as confirmation of this, with an educator as witness. Late fees are to be paid in cash upon collection of their child, or as soon as possible. The Nominated Supervisor will record the details on the late fee payment form and provide a copy to the parent.

Special circumstances i.e. traffic accident, vehicle breakdown, will be given consideration when applying the fee.

If a parent continues to collect their child after 5.30pm, the Nominated Supervisor will need to discuss other options with them, and suitable arrangements made or the child's place in the Service may be in jeopardy.

## 3.3 Cancellations/Absences

Two weeks' notice, in writing, is required to cancel permanent care. Payment is required up to and including the final day of care following this written notice. Please note that under Family Assistance Law, Child Care Benefit (CCB) is only payable until the last day of care provided. For more information or clarification, contact the Family Assistance Office.

Any changes in enrolment hours must be negotiated with the Nominated Supervisor, as this will be dependent on availability.





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## 4 Record Keeping (POLC-004)

All relevant records are maintained and retained to comply with Privacy Act and other relevant legislation and Acts.

### Related Procedures & Forms

FORM-004	Confidentiality Record
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### 4.1 Family Records

The primary purpose for the Service collecting family information is to enable us to provide an individual developmentally appropriate program for children that is educational, stimulating, nurturing and safe.

We require certain information be collected, in accordance with administration of Child Care Benefit, regulations or legislation that directly relate to the operation of a children's service. These include:

- Enrolment forms.
- Child Care Benefit information.
- Attendance records and absences.
- Medication, illness and accident records.
- Developmental portfolios.

Failure to provide information required for administration of Child Care Benefit could result in delays or cancelation of fee assistance.

The Service takes all reasonable precautions to ensure personal information that we collect, use and disclose is accurate, complete and up to-date. Please ensure you inform the Service of any changes to the information supplied.

### 4.2 Enrolled Children Records

The following records will be kept in relation to enrolled children.

Documentation relating to **child assessments or evaluations** for delivery of the education program, including:

- Assessments of the child's developmental needs, interests experiences and participation in the education program.
- Assessments of the child's progress against the outcomes of the educational program.

**Details of any Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record**, including:

- Details of any incident in relation to a child or injury receive by a child or trauma to which a child has been subject while being educated and care for by the Service. The following must be included:



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- The name and age of the child.
- The circumstances leading to the incident, injury or trauma.
- The time and date the incident occurred, the injury that was received or the child was subjected to the trauma.

**Details of any illness** that becomes apparent while the child is being educated and cared for by the Service. The following must be included:

- The name and age of the child.
- The relevant circumstances surrounding the child becoming ill and any apparent symptoms.
- The time and date of the apparent onset of the illness.

**Details of the action taken** by the Service in relation to any incident, injury, trauma or illness which a child has suffered while being educated and cared for by the Service. The following must be included:

- Any medication administered or first aid provided.
- Any medical personnel contacted.
- Details of any person who witness the incident, injury or trauma.
- The name of any person who the Service notified or attempted to notify and the time and date of the notification and notification attempts.
- The name and signature of the educator making an entry in the record and the time and date that the entry was made.
- This record must be recorded as soon as is practicable, but not later than 24 hours after the incident, injury, trauma or onset of illness occurred.

**A medication record** which includes the following:

- The name of the child.
- The authorisation to administer medication signed by a parent or a person named in the child's enrolment record as authorised to consent to administration of medication.
- The name of the medication to be administered.
- The time and date the medication was last administered.
- The time and date or the circumstance under which the medication should be next administered.
- The dosage of the medication to be administered.
- The manner in which the medication is to be administered.
- If the medication is administered to the child:
  - The dosage that was administered.
  - The manner in which the medication was administered.
  - The name and signature of the person who administered the medication.
  - If another individual is required to check the dosage, the name and signature of that person.



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**A record of attendance** for enrolled children, including:

- The full name of each child attending the service.
- The date and time each child arrives and departs.
- The signature of the person who delivers the child to the Service

**Child enrolment records** which include the following:

- The full name, date of birth and address of the child.
- The name, address and contact details of each known parent of the child, any person who is to be notified of any emergency involving the child if any parent of the child cannot be contacted immediately, any person who is an authorised nominee, any person who is authorised to consent to medical treatment of, or to authorise administration of medication to the child, any person who is authorised to authorise an educator to take the child outside the education and care service premises.
- Details of any court orders.
- Gender of the child.
- Language used in the child's home.
- Cultural background of the child and parents (if applicable).
- Any special considerations for the child (e.g. cultural, religious, dietary requirements or additional needs).
- Authorisations signed by a parent or authorised nominee consenting to the medical treatment of the child should the Nominated Supervisor seek:
  - Medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service.
  - Transportation of the child by any ambulance service.
- The name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service.
- Details of any specific healthcare needs of the child including any medical conditions or allergies including whether the child has been diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis, including details of any medical management plan.
- Details of any dietary restrictions for the child.
- The immunisation status of the child.

The Service must ensure that the documents referred to above in relation to a child enrolled at the Service are made available to a parent of the child on request. In line with this, if a parent's access to the kind of information referred to in this documentation is limited by an order of a court, the Approved Provider must refer to the court order in relation to the release of information concerning the child to that parent.



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## 4.3 Educator Records

All educators and members of the management committee will sign a Confidentiality Record (FORM-004). Educator information required for and during employment would be:

- The full name, address and date of birth
- Tax File Number Declaration Forms
- Curriculum vitae
- Ochre Card
- Next of kin details
- Immunisation status
- Salary records
- Performance reviews
- Work history
- Workers' compensation claims

### 4.3.1 Specific Requirements per Role

<p><b>Nominated Supervisors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of any relevant qualifications held by the Nominated Supervisor.</li> <li>• If applicable, evidence that the Nominated Supervisor is actively working towards that qualification. If this is the case, the following must be recorded:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of enrolment.</li> <li>• Documentary evidence that the Nominated Supervisor has commenced the course, is making satisfactory progress towards the completion of the course, is meeting the requirements of maintaining the enrolment.</li> <li>• For Nominated Supervisors who are working towards the completion of a Diploma level education and care qualification, proof that they hold an approved Certificate III level education and care qualification or has completed the units of study in an approved Certificate III level education and care qualification determined by ACECQA.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Evidence of any approved training (including first aid training) completed by the Nominated Supervisor.</li> <li>• If applicable, a Working with Children Check.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Educators</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of any relevant qualifications.</li> <li>• If applicable, evidence that the educator is actively working towards that qualification. If this is the case, the following must</li> </ul>



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	<p>be recorded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of enrolment.</li> <li>• Documentary evidence that the educator has commenced the course, is making satisfactory progress towards the completion of the course, is meeting the requirements of maintaining the enrolment.</li> <li>• For educators who are working towards the completion of a Diploma level education and care qualification, proof that they hold an approved Certificate III level education and care qualification or has completed the units of study in an approved Certificate III level education and care qualification determined by ACECQA.</li> <li>• Evidence of any approved training (including first aid training) completed by the educator.</li> <li>• A Working with Children Check.</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The name of the educator who is designated at this role.</li> </ul>
<b>Students and Volunteers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The full name, address and date of birth of each student or volunteer.</li> <li>• The Approved Provider must also keep a record for each day on which the student or volunteer participates in the service, the date and hours of participation.</li> <li>• A Working with Children check (Ochre Card)</li> </ul>
<b>Responsible Person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The educator record must include the name of the responsible person at the Service for each time that children are being educated and cared for by the service.</li> </ul>
<b>Educators working directly with children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The name of each educator.</li> <li>• The hours that each educator works directly with children. Please note that a educator roster or time sheet is sufficient record of this.</li> </ul>

## 4.4 Service Records

A record of the Services compliance with the law, including:

- Details of any amendments of the Service approval made by the Regulatory Authority including:
  - The reason stated by the Regulatory Authority for the amendment.
  - The date on which the amendment took, or takes, effect
  - The date (if any) that the amendment ceases to have effect.
- Details of any suspension of the Service (other than a voluntary suspension) including:
  - The reason stated by the Regulatory Authority for the suspension.



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- The date on which the suspension took, or takes, effect.
- The date that the suspension ends.
- Details of any compliance direction or compliance notice issued to the approved provider in respect of the Service, including:
  - The reason stated by the Regulatory Authority for issuing the direction or notice.
  - The steps specified in the direction or notice.
  - The date by which the steps specified must be taken.
- This information must not include any information that identifies any person other than the Approved Provider.
- A record of certified supervisors placed in day-to-day charge of the Service.

The record of compliance referred to above must be available for access on request by any person.

## 4.5 Retention & Storage of Records

The Service will keep records for the following periods:

- If the record relates to an incident, illness, injury or trauma suffered by a child while being educated and cared for by the Service, until the child is aged 25 years.
- If the record relates to an incident, illness, injury or trauma suffered by a child that may have occurred following an incident while being educated and cared for by the Service, until the child is aged 25 years.
- If the record relates to the death of a child while being educated and cared for by the Service or that may have occurred as a result of an incident while being educated and cared for, until the end of 7 years after the death.
- If the case of any other record relating to a child enrolled at the Service, until 3 years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the Service.
- If the record relates to the Approved Provider, until the end of 3 years after the last date on which the Approved Provider operated the Service.
- If the record relates to the Nominated Supervisor or an Educator, until the end of 3 years after the last date on which the Nominated Supervisor or an Educator provided education and care on behalf of the Service.
- In the case of any other record, 3 years after the date on which the record was made.

Records made by the Service will be stored in a safe and secure location, including personnel forms and employee information for the relevant time periods as set out above and only made accessible to relevant individuals.

If the Service is transferred under the law, documents relating to a child must not be transferred without the express consent of the child's parents.



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## 5 Privacy & Confidentiality (POLC-005)

This policy is to address the issues of privacy and confidentiality of children, educators, volunteer workers and parents using the Service. It aims to protect the privacy and confidentiality by ensuring that all records and information about individual children, families, educators and management are kept in a secure place and are only accessed by or disclosed to those people who need the information to fulfil their responsibilities at the Service or have a legal right to know.

### Related Procedures & Forms

FORM-004	Confidentiality Record
PROC-001	Grievance and Complaints Management

### 5.1 Privacy Guidelines

Personal information will only be collected in so far as it relates to the Service's activities and functions, and in line with relevant legislation.	National Privacy Principle 1.1 - Privacy Act 1998
Collection of personal information will be lawful, fair, reasonable and unobtrusive.	National Privacy Principle 1.2 - Privacy Act 1998
Individuals who provide personal information will be advised of: the name and contact details of the Service; the fact that they are able to gain access to their information; why the information is collected; the organisations to which the information may be disclosed; any law that requires the particular information to be collected; and the main consequences for not providing the required information.	National Privacy Principle 1.3 – Privacy Act 1998
The use or disclosure of personal information will only be for its original collected purpose, unless the individual consents or unless it is needed to prevent a health threat, or is required or authorised under law.	National Privacy Principle 2.1 – Privacy Act 1998
The Service will take steps to ensure the personal information collected, used or disclosed, is accurate, complete and up to date. Parents will be required to update their enrolment details annually, or whenever they experience a change in circumstances. Computer records will be updated as soon as new information is provided.	National Privacy Principle 3 – Privacy Act 1998
Personal information will be kept in a secure and confidential way, and destroyed by shredding or incineration, when no longer needed.	National Privacy Principle 4 – Privacy Act 1998
Individuals will be provided with access to their personal information and may request that their information be up-dated or changed where it is not current or correct.	National Privacy Principle 6 – Privacy Act 1998



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## 5.2 Use and Disclosure

### 5.2.1 Families

Personal and sensitive information is only disclosed to the Service's educators, for the specific purpose of administration and education of your child.

We will obtain parent/ guardian permission before disclosing a child's personal and sensitive information to a professional attending our Service for the specific purpose of providing a service for your child. This includes early intervention teachers, speech therapists, occupational therapists, doctors and counsellors.

Personal information collected about children is regularly disclosed to their own parents or guardians. On occasion's, information such as children's personal achievements, child portfolios and photos are displayed within the boundaries of the Service's building.

Information required to administer the Child Care Benefit is audited by the Department of Family and Community Services.

The Northern Territory Child Protection team have the right to access information about any family they may be investigating.

Children's individual portfolios may be disclosed to authorised personnel for quality assurance purposes.

Confidential conversations that educators have with parents, or the Nominated Supervisor has with educators will be conducted in a quiet area away from other children, parents and educators. Such conversations are to be minuted and stored in a confidential folder.

### 5.2.2 Educator

Some information obtained for employment will be disclosed to a selection panel. Necessary information is declared to the Australian Taxation Office or the QEC NT, for example age and qualifications and probity clearance.

On employment educators will be provided with our Confidentiality Policy and will be required to sign a Confidentiality Record (FORM-004).

- Applicants, students or volunteers will be informed that their personal information is being kept, for what reason, for how long, and how it will be destroyed at the end of the time period.
- Applicants will be asked for their consent before their references are checked. Unsuccessful applicants will be advised of when and how their personal information will be destroyed.
- Information about educators will only be accessed by the Nominated Supervisor.
- No educator may give information or evidence on matters relating to children and/or their families to anyone other than the responsible parent/guardian, unless prior written approval by the responsible parent/guardian is obtained. Exceptions may apply regarding information about





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children when subpoenaed to appear before a court of law. Notwithstanding these requirements, confidential information may be exchanged in the normal course of work with other educators at the Service and may be given to the Nominated Supervisor, when this is reasonably needed for the proper operation of the Service and the wellbeing of users and educators. (Privacy Act 1988).

- Reports, notes and observations about children will be accurate and free from biased comments and negative labelling of children.
- Educators will protect the privacy and confidentiality of other educators by not relaying personal information about another educator to anyone either within or outside the Service.
- Students/people on work experience/volunteers will not make educators/children or families at the Service, an object for discussion outside of the Service (e.g. college, school, home etc.), nor will they at any time use family names in recorded or tutorial information.
- Students/people on work experience/volunteers will only use information gained from the Service upon receiving written approval from the Service to use and/or divulge such information, and will never use or divulge the names of persons.

## 5.3 Access to Information

Parents/Guardians have the right to access personal information collected about them or their child; however, there may be occasions when access is denied. Such occasions would include where access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, where access may result in a breach of the Service's duty of care to the child or where children have provided information in confidence.

We will include your child's name, age and specific needs in their individual portfolio.

If you provide us, with the personal information of others, such as doctors or emergency contacts, we encourage you to inform them that you are disclosing that information to the Service and why. You will also need to inform them that they can access that information if they wish to do so.

Educators can access their records at a mutually agreed time with the Nominated Supervisor.

## 5.4 Data Security

Children's files are kept in the office for access by educators for programming and emergency contact details. Medical Administration or Accident information is accessible to educators only. Completed records are stored at the Service.

Educator and Management Committee information is kept in a lockable filing cabinet. Management Committee files are kept by the current secretary of the association.

## 5.5 Computers

Information stored on computers is password protected for the individual educator requiring access.

Computers used by children for pre-school work do not have internet access.



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The Service's stance on social networking websites is that they are for personal use only and should not be accessed while the educator is undertaking paid work. These include but are not limited to Facebook, MySpace and Twitter (including usage on any device such as the internet, mobile telephone or tablet). At no time will an educator distribute any information (i.e. Photos or comments) in regards to enrolled children and families or educators of the Service.

## 5.6 Complaints & Grievances

The Service is committed to privacy and confidentiality in all situations regarding grievances and complaints. The Nominated Supervisor will deal with privacy complaints promptly and in a consistent manner, following the Service's Grievance and Complaints Management procedure (PROC-001). Where the aggrieved person is dissatisfied after going through the grievance process, they may appeal in writing to "The Director of Complaints, Office of the Federal Privacy Commission, GPO Box 5218, Sydney NSW 1042, or phone the Commissioner's Hotline on 1300 363 992. (Privacy Act 1998). [www.privacy.gov.au](http://www.privacy.gov.au)

Note: there may be a requirement to disclose information to a third party when directed by legislative regulations. For example, if the complaint involves an educator, or if the nature of the complaint is about child protection issue and Office of Children and Families need to be informed under mandatory reporting legislation. In other circumstances, the complaint may be held in confidence with those individuals directly involved.

## 5.7 Photography Policy

In relation to any parent or family member who is visiting the Service with the intention to take photographs the Service will ensure:

- All families are notified in advance of when, why and by whom photographs may be taken in the Service.
- All families are given the opportunity to object to their child being involved in any photographs, and that these wishes are respected.
- Any parent or family member may only photograph their own child unless given permission by another child's parent.

The Service accepts that families may want to display photographs of their own child on the internet; however we do not condone the display of photographs taken of children from other families.



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## 6 Dealing with Complaints (POLC-006)

The Service has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of equity and fairness in relation to grievances and complaints management and procedures.

In meeting the Service's duty of care, the Management Committee and educator agree to implement and endorse the Service's Dealing with Complaints Policy.

The Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act NT states that employers have a duty of care to their employees to ensure that the working environment supports emotional and mental wellbeing.

### Related Procedures & Forms

PROC-001	Grievance and Complaints Management
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### 6.1 Values & Principles

The Service values:

- The opportunity to be heard.
- Procedural fairness and natural justice.
- A code of ethics and conduct.
- A culture free from discrimination and harassment.
- Promotion of conflict resolution.
- Transparent policies and procedures.
- Avenues for recourse and further investigation.

The three core principles of natural justice or procedural fairness are:

- The right to be heard fairly.
- The right to an unbiased decision made by an objective decision maker.
- The right to have the decision based on relevant evidence.

### 6.2 Communication with Families

- Every family is provided with clear written guidelines detailing grievance procedures, included in the Parent Handbook and displayed in the foyer of the Service.
- All confidential conversations/discussions with families will take place in a quiet area away from children, other families and educator who are not involved.
- Where a parent/guardian wishes their grievance to remain confidential this will be honoured. However families will be advised that issues cannot always be resolved if the parent/guardian chooses to remain anonymous.
- Where an educator believes they should share a confidence with another person in order to resolve an issue, they will inform the parent/guardian of this need prior to any further discussions on the matter.



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- Whenever a complaint or grievance is received it will be analysed to determine whether policy revision or development is required.
- The Management Committee follows through to determine that complaints and grievances have been successfully resolved to everyone's satisfaction.
- The name and contact number of the Services Compliance Officer from QEC NT is displayed in the foyer.
- A current copy of the Education and Care National Law and Regulations are available in the Nominated Supervisors office.

Refer to Grievance and Complaints Management procedure (PROC-001) for further information.

## 6.3 Applying strategies to different stakeholders

The grievance procedure for dealing with a complaint made by a child against another child will be different to the complaint procedures between educators. While the concepts will be similar, there may be specific procedures that accommodate a resolution specific to the relationship between stakeholders. For example, if the investigation is between two children, then parental consent may be sought before the mediation process can begin.

<b>Children</b>	<p>When a child makes a complaint against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ another child;</li> <li>▪ an educator; or</li> <li>▪ a family member or other adult</li> </ul> <p>it may be helpful to refer to the <i>Service's Interactions with Children Policy</i> or the <i>Child Safe Environment Policy</i> before undergoing any of the grievance procedures.</p>
<b>Families</b>	<p>When a family member makes a complaint against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ a child;</li> <li>▪ an educator; or</li> <li>▪ the Management Committee,</li> </ul> <p>then they will be directed to the procedure for grievances as noted in this policy.</p>
<b>Educator</b>	<p>When an educator or carer makes a complaint against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ a child;</li> <li>▪ a family member or other adult;</li> <li>▪ another educator; or</li> <li>▪ the Management Committee,</li> </ul> <p>then the procedures for educator complaints listed in this policy should be followed and a written statement of the complaint submitted.</p>
<b>Management</b>	<p>When management makes a complaint against:</p>



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<p><b>committee</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ a family member or other adult;</li> <li>▪ an educator;</li> <li>▪ an individual involved in the management of the Service, such as a committee member; or</li> <li>▪ a member of the community,</li> </ul> <p>the grievance procedures listed in this policy will be followed and a written document must be supplied stating what the complaint entails.</p>
<p><b>Community</b></p>	<p>If a Community member makes a complaint against the Service, directly to the Service, then it will be taken into consideration and a solution sought as soon as possible.</p> <p>If a community member makes a complaint against the Service through QECNT, then the grievance procedure of QECNT will be followed.</p>

## 6.4 Conflict of Interest

Conflicts of interest may arise during a grievance or complaints management procedure, especially when it involves the individual who normally mediates grievances and complaints in the Service. For example, if a parent voices a complaint against the Nominated Supervisor of the Service, and the manager is the individual who mediates all grievances and complaints, how does the complainant feel confident of:

- Being heard fairly.
- An unbiased decision making process.

In this scenario, where there is a conflict of interest between the parent and the Nominated Supervisor, which may result in an unfair mediation process, an alternative mediator may be nominated from the Service or the wider community who is able to be objective and fair in their approach.

## 6.5 Dealing with the Media

- If there is a situation when a grievance or complaint has been communicated to a media organisation and possibly exposed to the general population, the Service will maintain the right to make no public statement.
- If a statement is to be made, it will be to the point and not disclose any individuals by name. It will also be authorised by the President of the Management Committee.

## 6.6 Role Models

All educators, students and volunteers at the Service are role models.

- Children learn through example and role modelling is an important strategy to encourage children to manage conflict appropriately.



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- Educator, students and volunteers are encouraged to comply with the Dealing with Complaints Policy.
- The Service encourages educator to resolve grievances and complaints equitably and respectfully and when available, educator can attend professional development and training opportunities to improve their conflict resolution skills.
- Educator can role model to one another. Educators are able to discuss issues that consistently arise that may cause conflicts of opinion in educator meetings.
- Educators can role models to families. Regular workshops are offered in the community to develop ongoing parenting skills and knowledge training that may assist families in expanding their understanding of child development and current care giving best practices.
- Students offer a wealth of knowledge of up to date practices being taught in the profession, and while they deserve positive role models to learn from, they can also be a valuable resource for the Services.



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## 7 References

### Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011

### National Quality Standards (NQS)

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United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
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