

Learning Co-operative Supervision Policy

1. Rationale

- 1.1 The Learning Co-operative is committed to child safety and ensuring a safe environment and protection for all children under its care.
- 1.2 The Learning Co-operative, in discharging its duty of care, provides supervision for students on the school site and when engaged in school activities.
- 1.3 The supervision policy sets out the principles and framework governing the school's approach to this obligation. The policy, together with the policy implementation documents listed in section §11, should be read and understood by all those planning, leading and responsible for meeting this obligation.

2. Principles

- 2.1 Every student has a right to be safe at school.
 - 2.2 The school, as well as each individual teacher, has a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of each student.
 - 2.3 The school's duty of care extends to ensuring that students are protected from harm, including from risks of injury or harm that are known or which could have been reasonably foreseen and prevented.
 - 2.4 Although supervision is required primarily in order to meet the duty of care obligation, supervision is also one of a number of strategies that a school employs as it manages student behaviour in line with its behaviour policy and anti-bullying policy.
 - 2.5 The school is committed to ensuring that it provides adequate supervision of students in all learning environments, including online spaces, when on school grounds, in classrooms and on excursions.
 - 2.6 The school will ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities to supervise students and volunteers have the training they require to take part in supervision under the guidance of a teacher.
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3. Aims of the policy

3.1 To set out the framework governing the adequate supervision of students.

4. Legal and regulatory basis for compliance

Duty of Care

Education and Training Reform Act 2006

Education and Training Regulations 2017

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards: mandated registration requirements.

5. Key definitions

Proper arrangements-on and offsite

3.1 The regulatory requirements as set out by the VRQA require the school to make what the VRQA describes as ‘proper arrangements’:

- for the **on-site supervision** of students
- for the supervision of students when engaged in **off-site activities** and which include transport and consideration of the risk of bushfire in the activity location.

Duty of care

5.1 The school has a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students; and teachers have a similar individual duty of care. In discharging this duty the school, the principal, teachers and other school staff are held to a high standard of care in relation to students. The duty requires the principal and teachers to take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of harm to students¹ whenever and wherever the student is in the care of the school.

5.2 The school has a specific duty of care to provide adequate supervision in the school or when students are engaged in school activities.

¹ Victorian Department of Education and Training, *School policy: Duty of Care* (1 October 2018) Victorian Department of Education and Training <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcare.aspx> (Accessed 16 October 2018).

- 5.3 The duty is non-delegable, meaning that it cannot be assigned to another party. Teachers have a special duty of care with respect to supervision, other adults do not have the same duty of care.
- 5.4 The school's duty of care extends to students travelling on school buses i.e. buses that are owned by the school, which are driven by a member of the school staff or which are contracted directly by the school for the use of its own students only.
- 5.5 In order to meet its non-delegable duty of care, the school must put in place an appropriate level of supervision, taking into account the age and maturity of the students.
- 5.6 The school's duty of care does not extend to students travelling to school by public transport.
- 5.7 Parents are responsible for the supervision of their children travelling to and from school and outside the times of school supervision before and after school. By implication, therefore, the school is responsible for:
- providing parents with clear information as to the start and finish times of school supervision before and after school
 - providing parents with clear information about the timing of before and after-school activities and how that impacts on school supervision
 - student collection procedures

6. Scope

- 6.1 The application of this policy is relevant to the principal and all school staff and volunteers involved in ensuring proper supervision and implementing the supervision procedures.

7. Roles and responsibilities

- 7.1 The governing board is responsible for reviewing [and approving] the Supervision Policy.
- 7.2 The principal is responsible for:
- ensuring the school's duty of care is discharged and that teachers are aware of their duty of care
 - determining the school's student-staff ratios and level of supervision for each type of activity
 - approving the supervision procedures that give clarity as to how supervision is conducted

- ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities to supervise students.

7.3 Supervising staff are responsible for:

- their individual duty of care to students
- following the supervision procedures exactly and supervising students as directed.
- carrying out their assigned supervisory duties in such a way that students are, as far as can be reasonably expected, protected from injury

7.4 Volunteers are responsible for:

- supervising children for specific activities under the guidance of a teacher
- carrying out their assigned supervisory duties in such a way that students are, as far as can be reasonably expected, protected from injury

7.5 Parents are responsible for:

- supervising their children before and after school outside the times that school supervision is provided
- giving written permission as requested when students are engaged in self-directed activities.

8 Links to other Policies

Duty of Care

Behaviour Management Policy

First Aid Policy

Anaphylaxis Management Policy

Bushfire Preparedness Policy.

9 Policy

9.1 *Supervision ratios*

The school has developed guidelines (Appendix 1) to specify staff-student ratios taking into account:

- the age and maturity of students

- the number of students involved or the size of the group
- the nature of the activities
- the location within or outside the school.

In developing these guidelines, the school has considered and planned the appropriate level of supervision required for different situations and types of activity, balancing duty of care with the learning opportunity arising from allowing students to be independent.

For any identified higher risk activity e.g.using a glue gun, using a sharp knife direct supervision is required. For lower levels of risk, more general supervision is acceptable.

Students must be directly supervised at all times while using a swimming pool.

9.2 *Supervision by Volunteers*

The Learning Co-operative is unique in the role that parents play within the school community. Parents are often given a supervisory role under the guidance of a teacher. They are supported in this role through training, a supervision handbook and on-going support in weekly sessions on site.

Teachers have a higher level duty of care that cannot be delegated, parents must always be able to contact a teacher when supervising.

9.3 *Supervision training*

In order for parents to take on the role of effective supervisors, under the guidance of a teacher, the Learning Co-operative will:

- provide a supervision guideline pack to all new parents,
- run a supervision workshop at the start of each school year
- discuss and allocate supervision roles and responsibilities each day
- evaluate supervision requirements in the form of reviewing risk assessments before any excursion or higher risk activity onsite.
- discuss supervision during fortnightly parent meetings and regularly review any supervision related incidents

Additional training for staff and volunteers is required:

- supervisory staff and volunteers must be trained in the management of anaphylaxis, as set out in the Anaphylaxis Management Policy
- supervisory staff must be trained in First Aid.

9.4 *Before and after school*

The Learning Co-operative grounds are supervised by school staff from 8.45am until 3.15pm. Outside of these hours, school staff will not be available to supervise students.

Parents and carers should not allow their children to attend the Learning Co-operative outside of these hours unless they are under the direct responsibility of another parent. This is communicated to parents through the bulletin and at meetings.

If a student is not collected before supervision finishes at the end of the day, staff will:

- attempt to contact the parents/carers
- attempt to contact the emergency contacts

9.5 *Supervision on-site*

On-site supervision requires not only protection from known hazards, but also protection from those that could arise (that is, those the teacher should reasonably have foreseen) and against which preventive measures could be taken.

Supervision on-site is performed by staff members and parents, teachers hold a higher level duty of care responsibility that can not be delegated.

During focus time and adult led activities supervising staff/volunteers must:

- ensure adequate age-appropriate supervision, including consideration of the nature activities being undertaken to ensure proper use of plant and equipment, proper handling of any hazardous substances and use of relevant protective equipment.
- exercise due diligence in designing activities that take safety and care into consideration for all students with even greater care for younger students or students at risk.
- ensure volunteers are working under the guidance and direction of a teacher.
- the Student Code is discussed at the start of each year to highlight expectations, set appropriate boundaries and assist the smooth conduct of the student group.

During free-play/optional/child-led activities, at least 2 adults are supervising whilst other adults support activities for smaller groups. During free play supervision, supervising staff/volunteers must:

- methodically move around the school grounds inside and outside
- conduct regular head counts, (at least every 20 minutes).
- carry a small first aid 'bumbag' kit and a list of student names to help headcounts

- pro-actively walk around and keep an eye on students, and strangers who may be entering the school premises without permission. (Please ensure to have the office number and supervisors number to call in case of emergencies)!! This is a very important aspect of our 'Duty of Care'.
- be alert and vigilant
- intervene immediately if potentially dangerous or inappropriate behaviour is observed
- ensure students follow the Student Code of Conduct and Learning Contract
- ensure that students who require first aid assistance receive it as soon as practicable
- log any incidents or near misses as appropriate in the incident book.
- if swapping with another adult, ensure that a brief but adequate verbal 'handover' is given to the next person in relation to any issues which may have arisen during the first shift.

9.6 *Supervision off-site*

The following requirements will be followed in regard to offsite activities, including camps, excursions and local functions:

- For each offsite activity, there is a designated teacher-in charge.
- Staff and volunteers must refer to the teacher-in-charge for decision-making, changes in direction or programs, or issues of concern.
- Teachers are responsible for all of the students in the activity.
- Volunteers support teachers but are not authorised to make decisions for the group.
- Teachers must exercise due diligence in designing activities that take safety and care into consideration for all students, with even greater care for younger students.
- Teachers need to use a method of accounting for all students at any given point during the activity.
- If students need to use public toilets, they should be accompanied to the toilet block in pairs by an adult so as to monitor their safety at all times.
- A record of the activity, excursion or camp will be completed by the Teacher-in-charge of the activity and given to the principal, for approval, prior to the activity. This includes a risk assessment for the activity proposed and an Emergency Management Plan if required.

- Any accompanying or assisting non-teaching adult is required to have a current Working with Children Check (WWCC). The Child Safety Code of Conduct will be followed at all times.
- For overnight camps, gender balance in supervision will be considered, as outlined in the Activities, Camps and Excursions Policy.

The school's policy with regard to supervision for activities, camps and is covered in more detail within the school's Activities, Camps and Excursions Policy.

9.7 *Activities involving external providers on-site or off-site*

The following requirements will be followed in regard to activities involving external providers, either on the school site or offsite:

- The school is responsible for students at all times, and this responsibility cannot be delegated to others.
- The teacher in charge of the group is responsible for the group at all times.
- When an external provider is involved in working with a class or group of students, a teacher will be present throughout the activity: E.g. Swimming, camp activities, guest speaker on site.
- External providers are required to sign in at the school office.
- A record of the activity, excursion or camp will be completed by the teacher-in-charge of the activity and given to the principal, for approval, prior to the activity.
- If external providers are working with students 1:1, they will be within the supervision and line of sight of other teachers in the school, e.g. NDIS providers.
- If external providers, such as psychologists, are providing 1:1 testing, the schedule is monitored by office staff or a teacher.

9.8 *Supervision of technology*

Direct supervision of students using technology always occurs. As part of the student technology agreement, students are not able to access computers without an adult supervising.

9.9 *Supervision risk management*

Supervision requirements to mitigate risk are considered in the production of risk registers and risk assessments as outlined in the Risk Management Policy.

Effective supervision procedures/strategies are evaluated in the production and review of risk registers and considered before activities take place when risk assessments are reviewed.

10 Communication of the policy

- 10.1 The school will ensure that all school staff understand their duty of care towards students and the legal implications if that duty of care is breached.
- 10.2 The school will regularly discuss supervision at staff and parent meetings.
- 10.3 Supervision procedures will be reviewed before any excursions and higher risk activities through the review of risk assessments by staff and volunteers that explicitly mention supervision.

11. Policy implementation documents

The key documents required to implement this policy include procedures and guidelines for:

- supervision ratio guidelines for different activities (appendix 1)
- supervision responsibilities (appendix 2)
- supervision guidelines for volunteers (appendix 3)
- transport supervision guidelines for volunteers (appendix 4)

12. Policy Review

This policy was ratified by the School Board on: **11/10/2021**

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the ongoing overall policy review process.

Chairperson's signature:



(MYRA THEISZ)

Version and revision control record

Previous versions recorded in archive (Cloud storage)

Date	Version	Approver	Next Review Date
11/10/2021	3	Name:MYRA THEISZ Position: Chairperson of the School Board Signature: 	October 2022

Appendix 1: Supervision Ratio Guidelines for Different Activities

1. Excursions

All excursions and camps must have a minimum of 2 adults, including a minimum of 1 teacher.

Years 3-6

- **Local/ Day excursions**
1 to 10 adult-student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults
- **City Excursion**
- 1 to 8 adult – student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults
- **Overnight camps**
1 to 6 adult-student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults
- **Interstate travel**
1 to 5 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults
- **Overseas travel**
1 to 5 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults

Years prep- 2

- **Local/ Day excursions**
1 to 5 adult-student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults
- **City Excursion**
- 1 to 4 adult – student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults
- **Overnight camps**
1 to 2 adult-student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults
- **Interstate travel**
1 to 2 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults
- **Overseas travel**
1 to 2 staff-student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults

2. Free play Supervision:

1:8 adult: student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults

3. Adventure Activities:

- **Swimming Pool:**

Beginner swimmer: 1 to 5 adult- student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults

Intermediate swimmer: 1 to 10 adult- student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults

- **Inland/enclosed water ways**

Intermediate swimmers and above only: 1 to 6 adult- student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults (at least 1 supervising adult with appropriate swimming qualifications)

- **Coastal waterways**

Intermediate swimmers and above only 1 to 5 adult- student ratio with a minimum of 2 adults (at least 1 supervising adult with appropriate swimming qualifications)

- **Bushwalking**

Years 3- 6 1 to10 adult to student with a minimum of 2 adults

Years prep-2 1 to 5 adult to student with a minimum of 2 adults

- **Orienteering**

1 adult per group (minimum of 2 adults)

Appendix 2: Supervision Responsibility

Time	Activity	Supervision Responsibility
8.30am	Before School	Parents
8.45am	Before School	Teachers and Parents
9am	Start of School- Child led activities, free play, small group activities	Teachers and Volunteers (2 adults named as 'floating' adults actively supervising those not involved in activities run by other adults)
9.30am	Meeting	Teachers and Volunteers
10am	Focus Time Structured Activity	Teachers and Volunteers
10.30 – 11.45am	Optional activities, Child led activities, free play, small group activities	Teachers and Volunteers (2 adults named as 'floating' adults actively supervising those not involved in activities run by other adults)
11.45am – 12.30pm	Staggered lunch break by teacher/parents	At least 2 adults 'floating' and actively supervising
12.30 -1 pm	Meeting	Teachers and Volunteers
1 – 1.30pm	Focus Time Structured Activity	Teachers and Volunteers
1.30 – 3.15pm	Optional activities, Child led activities, free play, small group activities	Teachers and Volunteers (2 adults named as 'floating' adults actively supervising those not involved in activities run by other adults)
After 3.15pm	After school	Parents

Appendix 3: Supervision Guidelines – taken from DET accessed Sep 2021

What is adequate supervision?

Supervision is an integral part of the whole education and care experience. At its most basic level, supervision helps to protect children from harm and hazards that may arise in their daily experiences in play, interactions with others, and daily routines. Adequate supervision means that an adult can respond immediately including when a child is distressed or is in a hazardous situation.

Supervision is constantly observing and relating to individual children and groups of children to contribute to their safety, health and wellbeing.

Supervision involves more than preventing or responding to potential or actual harm and hazards. It requires the educator to be actively involved with children and have knowledge of what each child is doing at any given time of the day.

Through supervision educators get to know each child and develop essential understandings about them in the social setting of the education and care service.

Thoughtful supervision of children creates opportunities to assess each child's strengths and interests and ways of relating to other children and adults. These assessments are valuable contributions to planning the program. Sharing assessments with families, with others responsible for the child and with the children themselves is important. This helps to build partnerships and increase understanding of children.

Supervision can contribute to building positive relationships between educators and children. When children are being supervised adequately, there will be evidence of strong, mutually respectful relationships between educators and children.

What does adequate supervision look like?

Although the provision of adequate supervision depends somewhat on the children's ages and abilities, every child at the service should always be monitored actively and diligently. It means knowing where children are at all times.

Children of different ages and abilities will need different levels of supervision. Younger children will always need to be in sight of an adult whereas older children may not. In general, the younger children are, the more they may need an adult to be physically present and close by to support and help them.

Adequate supervision is therefore likely to be different for different services. For example, in a centre-based service for young children, adequate supervision will mean that the children remain in close proximity to the adult who is supervising them.

In contrast, in an outside school hours care service, in which children are older, knowing where each child is and ensuring that educators are in a position to respond may be considered adequate supervision.

Whenever children are being cared for, educators will need to make decisions throughout the day about where they are best placed to adequately supervise each child.

In a group of children of the same age there will be some children who need more supervision than others. Educators learn about this as they get to know children.

Educator to child ratios

For centre-based services educator to child ratios must be met whenever children are being educated and cared for by a service (section 169). The Educator to child ratios and qualifications fact sheet outlines the minimum number of educators required to educate and care for children. However, meeting these ratios may not always be sufficient to provide adequate supervision in all education and care services.

For family day care services the maximum number of children that can be educated by a family day care educator are outlined in regulation 124. However meeting these requirements may not always be sufficient to provide adequate supervision.

For all service types, the adequacy of supervision is determined by a range of factors, including the following:

- number of children
- ages of children
- abilities of children
- number and positioning of adults
- each child's current activity, for example, physical activities, art activities and playing with others
- areas where the children are engaging in the activities, in particular the visibility and accessibility of these areas
- adults' knowledge of each child and each group of children
- experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- need for educators to move between areas.

Planning for supervision

For centre-based services several factors affect decisions about how many educators are needed for supervision and where they should be placed. The number of educators needed in each area of the service for adequate supervision will need to be carefully considered. It

will depend on the number of children and the different areas in which the children are located at any one time during the day. A flexible approach to educator placement throughout the day will be required to ensure adequate supervision.

Adequate supervision requires teamwork and constant communication among all educators.

All areas available to children in all service types must be supervised. All educators must be alert to and aware of what is going on around them. Educators must be alert to the potential for accidents, injuries and other harmful incidents throughout the whole service, not just within their own immediate area.

Appendix 4: Supervising (non driving) Adults on Minibus

Before Setting Off

- Reserve the most appropriate seat for yourself to allow you to supervise the passengers. This is likely to be near the side door.
- Never allow passengers to board until the vehicle is at a complete standstill, and safely parked by an adjacent pavement or other traffic free area.
- See that passengers are supervised when boarding the vehicle, especially if they are using a rear door.
- **Take particular care with the door, an adult must open and close the door. Do not allow child passengers to operate the doors, and supervise any operation of the doors by responsible persons.**
- **Always try and board/unload the bus on the flat but be aware if you are on a hill the door could shut forcibly on to a child if it is not properly opened and locked open. On a hill an adult must ensure the door is locked open and stand next to the door as children are being loaded/unloaded.**
- Make sure there is a complete list of the passengers being carried with a note of any special medical or other needs. Keep the list with other relevant documents in a place where it can be readily found in the event of an accident.
- Check that no bags or clothing are caught in the doors, and no latecomers are approaching the vehicle before it moves off.
- Check that all luggage is secured, and that all gangways and exits are clear.
- Check sick bags are easily accessible
- Ensure the driver does not move off until everyone is safely seated, facing the front and wearing a properly positioned and adjusted seat belt (if fitted), or using a securely fixed and properly adjusted special harness, seat or child restraint if appropriate.
- Help to direct the vehicle if the driver needs to reverse, but do not stand directly behind the vehicle out of the driver's sight. Children must never direct a reversing vehicle.
- As you are moving off do a final head count for the driver to ensure that everyone is accounted for.

During the Journey

- Do not allow noisy or boisterous behaviour.
- Try to keep the children occupied the journey will seem much quicker.
- Enforce a 'No Smoking' rule.

- Enforce a 'No Alcohol' rule.
- Do not allow passengers to operate the doors, unless supervised.
- **Make sure that all passengers have returned to the vehicle after any rest stops. Do a head count each time the bus moves off.**
- If there is any serious delay during the journey inform the school or organisation so that information may be passed to parents. A mobile telephone is very useful for this purpose.
- Children and vulnerable passengers must not be left unaccompanied in the minibus.
- If the vehicle breaks down, or if there is a collision, give clear instructions to the passengers and see that children remain supervised: their safety is paramount.
- If there is a risk of fire, however small, evacuate the vehicle and move the occupants to a safe place.
- Ensure that litter is disposed of carefully (in a litter bag or bin) as cans rolling around the floor can be distracting.

At the End of the Journey

- Never allow passengers to leave until the vehicle is at a complete standstill, and safely parked by an adjacent pavement or other traffic free area. If travelling in a country that drives on the right, be aware that some doors may open onto the roadside.
- Ensure that passengers are supervised when leaving the vehicle, especially if they are using a rear exit, and that no parts of their clothing are caught in the vehicle's doors.
- Do not leave children or vulnerable passengers alone if no one has arrived to collect them.
- If necessary, assist the driver to reverse the vehicle. Never allow a child to do this. Do not stand directly behind the vehicle while it is reversing.
- Ensure that passengers take all their personal belongings with them.