

SUPERVISION POLICY

We are ultimately committed to support the safety and well-being of children in our school.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear expectations for the active and continuous supervision of children in the daycare program. Effective supervision is essential to protect children from foreseeable risks, support their well-being, and provide a safe, responsive, and positive learning environment.

Our centre is committed to maintaining supervision practices that are **proactive** rather than reactive. Staff are expected **to anticipate** potential hazards, **remain aware** of children's activities and locations, and **intervene promptly** when a safety concern arises.

Definition of Active Supervision

Active supervision means staff continuously position themselves, observe, listen, anticipate risks, and interact with children in a manner that allows them to respond immediately when assistance or intervention is required.

Active supervision includes:

1. **Knowing where every child is at all times.**
2. **Maintaining appropriate sight and/or sound supervision** based on the children's age, developmental needs, activity, and applicable licensing requirements.
3. **Positioning staff strategically** so that areas of potential risk are visible and accessible.
4. **Scanning and counting children frequently**, particularly during transitions.
5. **Listening for changes in children's activity or behaviour.**
6. **Anticipating hazards** before they result in an incident.
7. **Moving throughout the environment** rather than remaining in one location for extended periods.
8. **Intervening promptly** when a child is at risk of injury or when unsafe behaviour occurs.
9. **Maintaining awareness of the entire group**, even while providing individual attention.
10. **Communicating with other staff** when responsibility for supervision changes.

Staff Responsibilities

All Staff

- Providing **active supervision** at all times when children are in their care.

- **Knowing** the number, identity, and location of children assigned to them.
- Following required **staff-to-child ratios** and group-size requirements.
- Remaining **attentive** and avoiding distractions that interfere with supervision.
- **Positioning** themselves to maintain **effective observation** of children.
- Conducting regular **head counts and attendance** checks.
- **Communicating** clearly with coworkers about supervision responsibilities.
- **Reporting** hazards, missing children, injuries, near misses, and supervision concerns immediately.
- Following **individual** support plans and documented accommodations for children who require additional support/supervision.
- **Never assuming** another staff member is supervising a child without confirming the transfer of responsibility.
- Following all applicable **daycare policies** and **licensing requirements**.

Head Teachers

- Organizing **staff positions** to provide effective coverage of the environment.
- Reviewing supervision **risks** associated with planned activities.
- Assigning clear **supervision responsibilities** during transitions and routines.
- Ensuring **attendance records and head counts** are accurate.
- Monitoring **staff-to-child ratios**.
- Identifying children who may require **increased supervision**.
- Addressing **supervision concerns** with staff promptly.
- Informing the supervisor/director of significant or recurring **supervision concerns**.

Supervisor

- Ensuring **adequate staffing** and appropriate staff deployment.
- Providing **orientation and ongoing training** regarding supervision.
- Establishing procedures for **high-risk activities** and environments.
- Conducting **regular reviews** of supervision practices.
- Investigating supervision-related **incidents and near misses**.
- Ensuring **corrective actions** are implemented when deficiencies are identified.
- Maintaining required **documentation**.
- Ensuring the physical **environment supports** effective supervision.
- Taking **appropriate action** when staff do not meet supervision expectations.

Students, Volunteers, and Visitors

Students, volunteers, and visitors must follow the direction of designated daycare staff. They must not be relied upon as substitutes for required qualified staff or as the sole person responsible for supervising children.

Day-to-Day Supervision Expectations

Before Children Arrive

Staff will:

- Inspect the environment for hazards.
- Ensure gates, doors, furniture, equipment, and play areas are safe.
- Confirm that required supplies and emergency equipment are accessible.
- Review attendance information and any relevant individual support plans.
- Identify activities or areas requiring additional supervision.
- Confirm staff assignments and responsibilities.

During Indoor Activities

Staff will:

- Maintain continuous awareness of all children.
- Position themselves where they can observe the majority of the group.
- Avoid sitting with their back to children when this prevents effective supervision.
- Move between activity areas as necessary.
- Pay particular attention to areas that may be partially obstructed from view.
- Monitor interactions between children and intervene when behaviour presents a risk.
- Keep potentially hazardous materials and equipment appropriately secured.

Outdoor Play

Before outdoor play, staff will inspect the play area and equipment for hazards.

During outdoor play, staff will:

- Spread out strategically rather than congregating together.
- Maintain visual coverage of the entire play area.
- Pay particular attention to climbing equipment, entrances/exits, secluded areas, and other higher-risk locations.
- Regularly scan the entire play space.
- Conduct head counts at appropriate intervals and whenever children move between areas.
- Ensure gates and boundaries are secure.
- Intervene promptly when unsafe play or behaviour occurs.

Transitions

Transitions present an increased risk of children becoming separated from the group. Staff will:

- Establish a clear procedure before moving children.
- Count children before leaving an area.
- Count children during or immediately after the transition.
- Maintain visual contact with the group.

- Assign staff to the front, middle, and/or rear of the group when appropriate.
- Check bathrooms, hallways, outdoor areas, and other spaces before leaving.
- Conduct a final head count after arriving at the destination.

Arrival and Departure

Staff will:

- Follow established sign-in/sign-out procedures.
- Confirm that children are released only to authorized individuals.
- Maintain supervision while families are entering or leaving.
- Be alert to children attempting to leave the designated area.
- Never leave a child unattended near an entrance or exit.
- Ensure doors and gates are secured as required.

Meals and Snacks

Staff will:

- Maintain active supervision throughout meals and snacks.
- Follow applicable food safety and allergy procedures.
- Be aware of children who require modified diets or allergy precautions.
- Remain attentive to children while they are eating to prevent choking incidents.
- Avoid distractions that could delay an emergency response.

Rest and Sleep Periods

Staff will:

- Follow the daycare's approved sleep supervision procedures.
- Maintain the required level of observation for the children's age and program.
- Conduct and document checks where required.
- Ensure sleep spaces remain safe and free from hazards.
- Respond promptly to changes in a child's condition or behaviour.

Washroom and Personal Care

Staff will provide supervision appropriate to the children's age, developmental abilities, privacy needs, and applicable requirements.

Staff will:

- Maintain awareness of children using washroom or personal-care areas.
- Balance children's privacy with required safety supervision.
- Check areas regularly where children may be temporarily out of direct sight.
- Never leave a child in a situation where staff cannot respond to an emergency.

High-Risk Situations Requiring Increased Supervision

Additional supervision and risk controls must be considered for:

- Water play activities
- Field trips and community outings
- Transportation
- Outdoor play
- Climbing or physically challenging equipment
- Cooking or activities involving heat
- Use of tools or potentially hazardous materials
- Children with identified additional support needs
- Large-group activities
- Arrival and departure periods
- Transitions
- Unfamiliar environments
- Visitors or special events
- Emergency situations

The Head teacher or Supervisor will determine appropriate staffing positions and additional precautions before these activities begin.

Staff Positioning and Communication

Staff must position themselves so that supervision is effective rather than relying solely on being physically present in the same room or area.

Staff will:

- Avoid unnecessary clustering together.
- Avoid prolonged conversations that interfere with supervision.
- Use clear verbal communication when transferring responsibility for children.
- Inform coworkers before leaving an area.
- Confirm who is assuming responsibility before leaving.
- Immediately communicate changes in group numbers or location.

A staff member must never leave children without ensuring that another authorized staff member has assumed supervision.

Head Counts and Attendance Checks

Head counts must be completed:

- At the beginning and end of the day as applicable.
- Before leaving a room or activity area.
- After arriving at a new location.
- Before and after outdoor play.
- During transitions.
- Before and after transportation or community outings.

- Whenever there is uncertainty about a child's location.
- At other intervals required by the daycare's procedures or applicable regulations.

Head counts must be reconciled with attendance records. If the number of children does not match the expected attendance, staff must immediately stop the transition/activity and locate the missing child.

Preventive Measures

The daycare will reduce supervision-related incidents through the following measures:

Staffing

- Maintain required staffing levels and ratios.
- Avoid assigning staff responsibilities that unnecessarily divide their attention.
- Ensure staff understand their individual supervision assignments.
- Arrange appropriate coverage for staff breaks.

Environment

- Conduct regular safety inspections.
- Remove or correct hazards promptly.
- Maintain clear sightlines where practical.
- Secure exits and restricted areas.
- Arrange furniture and equipment to support effective supervision.
- Ensure outdoor areas are appropriately enclosed and monitored.

Training

Staff will receive training and orientation covering:

- Active supervision
- Child development and age-appropriate risk assessment
- Emergency procedures
- Missing-child procedures
- Safe transitions
- Outdoor supervision
- Safe sleep practices, where applicable
- Choking and emergency response
- Recognizing and responding to unsafe behaviour
- Incident and near-miss reporting
- Individual child safety plans

Planning

Before activities begin, staff should consider:

- What could go wrong?
- Which children may require additional support?
- Where are the areas with reduced visibility?
- Where should staff position themselves?
- How will children be counted?
- What will happen if a staff member needs to leave?

- What emergency equipment or procedures may be required?

Distraction-Free Supervision

Personal devices **must not be used** during active supervision except when authorized for legitimate program, communication, documentation, or emergency purposes.

Staff must avoid:

- Personal phone use
- Extended conversations unrelated to supervision
- Unnecessary administrative tasks while supervising
- Wearing equipment that significantly interferes with hearing or awareness
- Activities that prevent staff from promptly responding to children

Administrative tasks should be completed at times and in locations that do not compromise supervision.

Responding to a Supervision Concern

When a staff member identifies a supervision concern, they must act immediately to protect the children and notify the appropriate supervisor.

Depending on the situation, corrective action may include:

- Repositioning staff.
- Reassigning supervision responsibilities.
- Increasing staffing in a particular area.
- Removing an environmental hazard.
- Modifying an activity.
- Increasing head counts.
- Reviewing an individual child's support plan.
- Providing additional staff coaching or training.
- Reviewing staffing patterns or procedures.

Missing Child Procedure

If a child cannot be immediately located the staff will immediately implement procedures under centre's Missing Child Policy.

Incident and Near-Miss Reporting

Supervision-related incidents and near misses must be reported to management promptly.

Examples include:

- A child leaving a supervised area.
- A child being temporarily unaccounted for.

- A child entering a restricted area.
- A staff member discovering that supervision was unintentionally interrupted.
- An injury resulting from inadequate or compromised supervision.
- A repeated supervision concern involving a particular activity, location, or staffing arrangement.

Management will review incidents and near misses to identify contributing factors and implement preventive measures.

Documentation and Review

Our centre will maintain appropriate records relating to:

- Attendance and head counts
- Staff assignments
- Safety inspections
- Incidents and near misses
- Training
- Corrective actions
- Reviews of supervision practices

Supervision practices will be reviewed regularly and whenever there is:

- A serious incident.
- A repeated near miss.
- A change to the physical environment.
- A change to the children's needs.
- A change to staffing or programming.
- A relevant change in licensing or regulatory requirements.

Accountability

Failure to follow this policy may place children at risk and may result in coaching, retraining, increased supervision of the staff member, or disciplinary action in accordance with the daycare's employment policies and applicable law.

All staff are expected to take responsibility for maintaining a safe environment and to raise concerns when they believe supervision may be inadequate.

Management Commitment

We recognize that effective supervision is a shared responsibility. Management will provide staff with appropriate training, resources, staffing, environmental controls, and procedures to support safe supervision.