

BERMAGUI PRESCHOOL



4.41 Paramountcy in Child Safe Practice

This policy was approved by the Nominated Supervisor in consultation with staff and families.

Date Approved: July 2026

Review Date: July 2029

Aim

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- Children's safety, welfare and wellbeing are the primary consideration in all decisions and actions.
- A culture of child safety and wellbeing is actively promoted throughout the Preschool.
- All educators, staff, volunteers, students and management understand and fulfil their child protection obligations.
- Effective procedures are in place for identifying, responding to, recording and reporting child protection concerns.
- Children are appropriately supervised and accounted for at all times.

Introduction

Bermagui Preschool is committed to providing a child safe environment where the safety, welfare and wellbeing of every child is paramount. The Preschool recognises that children have the right to be protected from harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence and to experience quality education and care in an environment that promotes their dignity, rights and participation.

In all actions, decisions and practices concerning children, the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child will take precedence over all other considerations.

This policy supports compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, Child Safe Standards, Child Protection legislation, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Approved Provider
- Nominated Supervisor
- Responsible Persons
- Educational Leaders
- Educators
- Staff members
- Volunteers
- Students
- Contractors and visitors

Strategies

1. Paramountcy Principle

Bermagui Preschool is committed to ensuring that for any action or decision concerning a particular child:

- The safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child is paramount.
- The rights and best interests of the child are prioritised over organisational, operational, financial or reputational considerations.
- Decisions affecting children are made in a manner that promotes their physical, emotional, psychological, cultural and social wellbeing.
- Children's voices, views and experiences are respected and considered in age-appropriate ways.

- Children are supported to express concerns and participate in decisions affecting them where appropriate.

Where there is any conflict between the interests of adults and the interests of a child, the child's safety, welfare and wellbeing will take precedence.

2. Promoting a Culture of Child Safety and Wellbeing

Bermagui Preschool actively promotes a culture where child safety and wellbeing are embedded in everyday practice.

The Preschool will:

- Demonstrate leadership commitment to child safety.
- Foster respectful and supportive relationships with children and families.
- Encourage children to speak up about concerns and to identify trusted adults.
- Maintain clear expectations regarding professional boundaries and appropriate conduct.
- Provide information to families regarding child safety practices.
- Ensure policies and procedures are accessible to staff, families and volunteers.
- Promote inclusion, equity and respect for diversity.
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Regularly review child safe practices and continuous improvement processes.

3. Child Protection Training

The Preschool will ensure all child protection training requirements under the National Law and relevant legislation, including section 162A requirements, are met.

Requirements

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- All educators and staff complete mandatory child protection training during induction.
- Mandatory Reporter Training is completed and refreshed as required.
- Child Safe Standards training is undertaken by all staff.
- Training records are maintained and monitored.
- Staff receive ongoing professional learning relating to:
 - recognising indicators of abuse and neglect
 - responding to disclosures
 - reporting obligations
 - professional boundaries
 - risk management
 - child safe practices.

Responsibilities

Educators and staff must:

- Participate in all required training.
- Apply training knowledge in daily practice.
- Seek guidance when child protection concerns arise.

4. Child Protection Concerns Register

The Preschool will maintain a confidential Child Protection Concerns Register.

Purpose

The register assists the service to:

- Record concerns relating to a child's safety, welfare or wellbeing.
- Monitor patterns of concern.
- Support reporting and follow-up actions.
- Ensure accountability and record keeping.

Register Contents

The register will include:

- Child's name.
- Date and time of concern.
- Description of observations or disclosure.
- Person reporting the concern.
- Actions taken.
- Reporting outcomes.
- Follow-up actions.
- Date of review.

Confidentiality

- Access is restricted to authorised personnel.
- Records are stored securely.
- Information is managed in accordance with privacy and confidentiality requirements.

5. Reporting Decision Tree

The Preschool will maintain a Child Protection Reporting Decision Tree to guide staff in responding to concerns.

Requirements

The Reporting Decision Tree must:

- Reflect current NSW child protection reporting pathways.
- Include mandatory reporting obligations.
- Include contact details for relevant agencies.
- Identify escalation processes within the service.
- Be reviewed regularly to ensure currency.

Accessibility

A copy of the Reporting Decision Tree will be:

- Displayed in staff areas.
- Included in staff induction materials.
- Accessible electronically to all staff.
- Available during all operating hours.

All staff must know where the Reporting Decision Tree is located and how to use it.

6. Child Protection Risk Assessments

The Preschool will undertake child protection risk assessments to identify and minimise risks to children.

Risk Assessment Areas

Assessments may include:

- Physical environments.
- Supervision arrangements.
- Toileting and personal care practices.
- Excursions and transportation.
- Digital technologies and online environments.
- Staffing arrangements.
- Visitor management.
- Volunteer and student placements.
- Child behaviour support practices.
- One-to-one interactions between adults and children.

Risk Management

Identified risks will be:

- Documented.
- Assessed according to likelihood and consequence.
- Controlled through preventive measures.
- Reviewed regularly.
- Monitored following incidents or changes to practice.

Risk assessments will be reviewed at least annually and following any significant incident.

7. Attendance Records and Child Accountability

Bermagui Preschool is committed to ensuring children are accounted for at all times while attending the service.

Attendance Records

The service will maintain attendance records in accordance with Regulation 158.

Attendance records will include:

- Child's full name.
- Time of arrival.
- Time of departure.
- Signature or authorised verification of arrival and departure.

Day-to-Day Practices

To ensure children are accounted for throughout the day, educators will:

- Conduct regular head counts and sight checks.
- Verify attendance at transition times.
- Monitor indoor and outdoor movement of children.
- Reconcile attendance records with children present.
- Conduct checks before and after excursions.
- Account for all children during emergency evacuations and lockdowns.
- Maintain active supervision at all times.
- Investigate any discrepancy immediately.

Missing Child Procedure

If a child cannot be located:

1. Immediate supervision of remaining children will be maintained.
2. A systematic search will commence immediately.
3. The Nominated Supervisor will be notified.
4. Parents/guardians and emergency services will be contacted where required.
5. Regulatory reporting obligations will be met.
6. An incident review and risk assessment will be undertaken.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider

The Approved Provider will:

- Promote a child safe culture.
- Ensure appropriate policies and procedures are implemented.
- Provide resources and training.
- Monitor compliance with legislative requirements.

Nominated Supervisor

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Implement this policy.
- Support staff in responding to concerns.
- Maintain required records and registers.
- Ensure reporting obligations are fulfilled.

Educators and Staff

Educators and staff will:

- Prioritise children's safety, welfare and wellbeing.
- Follow child protection procedures.
- Report concerns promptly.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Participate in required training.

Relevant Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Law
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Child Safe Standards
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)
- Reportable Conduct Scheme requirements
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Resources and References

- Department of Education
- CELA
- Education and Care Services National Law
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Child Safe Standards
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)
- Reportable Conduct Scheme requirements
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Every 3 years;
- Following legislative changes;
- Following a child protection incident or concern;
- Following feedback from families, educators or regulatory authorities.

Review outcomes will be documented and communicated to relevant stakeholders.

Related Policies

- Child Protection Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Supervision Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Record Keeping Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Staffing Arrangements Policy

Version History

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