

POLICY MANAGEMENT

QUALITY AREA 7 – GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP



PURPOSE

This policy details how Sparkways maintains written policies and procedures that clearly communicates the service operation and reflects national and state regulatory requirements and contemporary views on evidence-based practice.



POLICY STATEMENT

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Sparkways is committed to:

- Delivering high quality early education and care for children and families
- proactive leadership and governance of the service
- effective and efficient management systems
- a continuous improvement approach of the service and its educational program
- facilitating a shared understanding of the service’s statement of philosophy that underpins practice and decision-making

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending Sparkways.



RESPONSIBILITIES

	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensuring that the service operates in compliance with the <i>Education and Cares Services National Law, the Education and Cares Services National Regulations and the National Quality Standards</i>	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that the service has in place policies and procedures in relation to the matters set out in <i>Regulations 168 (2)</i>	R	✓			
Ensuring adequate systems are in place to maintain the compliant operation of the service	✓	✓			
Taking reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors and staff members of, and volunteers follow the policies and procedures required under <i>Regulation 168</i>	R				
Ensuring that policies and procedures are well-documented, maintained and easily accessible to staff members and families (<i>Regulations 171</i>)	R	✓			
Ensuring families are notified at least 14 days before making changes to policies and procedures that may have significant impact on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the service’s provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; or the family’s ability to utilise that service (<i>Regulations 172</i>) 	R	✓			
Ensuring that families are notified at least 14 days before making any change to the <i>Fees Policy</i> that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected (<i>Regulation 171 (2)</i>)	R	✓			
Ensuring families are notified as soon as practicable after making a change to policies listed under <i>Regulations 168</i> if they believe the notice period would pose a risk to the safety, health of wellbeing of the children and staff at the service (<i>Regulation 172 (3)</i>)	R	✓			
Ensuring that the service’s statement of philosophy is reflected within the services suite of policies and procedures	✓	✓	✓		
Developing a sustainable policy review system	✓	✓			
Delegating a Responsible Person/s for each policy and procedure to be reviewed within the scheduled cycle	✓	✓			
Ensuring version control and amendments are documented	✓	✓	✓		
Regularly communicating policies and procedures, inviting feedback and working in collaboration with families to support a shared understanding of the service’s practices	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reviewing final drafts and provide endorsement	✓				



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

Efficient and effective policies and procedures are an essential part of a service's operation. They ensure compliance with laws and regulations, provide a road map for the day-to-day operations and set standards of behaviour, conduct and performance. When followed, the service can run smoothly, and any risks can be identified in a timely manner. Policies and procedures reduce liability risk and promote a safe and healthy environment for all users of the service.

The *Education and Care Service National Regulations, 2011* states that the approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that the service has policies and procedures in place as set out in *Regulation 168 (2)*.

While the National Regulations and the National Quality Standards (NQS) do not specify how often the review of policies and procedures should occur, policies should be reviewed regularly to meet the changing needs of the service and continued compliance with legislation.

As a general rule, every policy should be reviewed regularly (every one to three years), when legislative changes occur, and if there's a change of processes or when an incident occurs that may also impact on the policy review process. Policies can be prioritised for review according to how often the content is expected to change. Policies should be up to date with current research and contemporary views on evidence-based practice, and support a shared understanding of a service's practices, purpose and philosophy.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
National Quality Standard 2020

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the Sparkways policy catalogue.

Evidence based practice: The process of combining best available research, knowledge from professional experts, and data proven to achieve positive outcomes for children and families.

Policy: High-level guidelines that are underpinned by legislation and define the culture of the service by shaping decisions and providing a framework for daily activities.

Procedure: Details the action to be taken to address the policy and outlines the implementation process. It facilitates decision making, provides consistency and independence and enhances effective management and teamwork.

Philosophy statement: A statement about the beliefs, attitudes, core principles and values that underpin practices in your service. It should reflect the guiding principles outlined in the *Education and Care Service's National Law Act 2010 and the Early Years Learning Framework and Framework*.



SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: www.acecqa.gov.au
- Guide to the National Quality Standard: www.acecqa.gov.au
- ELAA's Helpful resources for policy development: <https://ela.org.au/resources/free-resources>
- ELAA's Version Control Guide: [My Memberships](#) – PolicyWorks – File Download

RELATED POLICIES

- Fees
 - Governance and Management of the Service
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EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- seek feedback from people affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required



AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by Sparkways on 06/03/2024

REVIEW DUE: March 2025
