

Children and Young People (ACT Childcare Services) Standards 2009 (No 1)

Disallowable instrument DI2009–11

made under the

Children and Young People Act 2008, section 887 (Standard-making Power)

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Core Standards – summary of sections

Core standards apply to all licensed childcare services in the ACT and must be adhered to at all times. In addition to core standards, there are service type specific standards.

Operating Procedures (standards 1.1-1.33)

Standards in this section set the minimum requirements for all licensed childcare services in the ACT in relation to administrative procedures.

These standards detail requirements regarding records and record keeping, confidentiality, and required forms and documentation.

Standards in this section also list required policies and procedures, information available to parent/guardians and staff, personnel management, and insurance coverage.

Staffing (standards 1.34-1.50)

Standards in this section set the minimum requirements for staff involved at each service. They include the requirement for all people employed at or involved with the children of the service to be assessed as fit and proper. These people must also have a police records check conducted upon employment and every three years.

This section also details requirements regarding controlling people, childcare worker competencies and supervision requirements. The minimum staff: child ratios (1.42) and maximum group sizes (1.44) for each service type are also detailed in this section.

Standards in this section also include junior staff, staff qualifications, mandatory reporting requirements and staff health.

Programming and Planning (standards 1.51-1.60)

The planning requirements for childcare centres (centre based, school age, playschools and independent preschools) are stated in this section. They describe the key items required to be evident within a documented program, such as including pay

as essential, valued and meaningful learning, and respecting childrens' preferences and involving children in decision making about their participation. These standards also specify factors to be considered when planning such as group size and composition; and the opportunities children must be provided with whilst attending the centre such as, building relationships and learning strategies for active exploration, taking risks, thinking and reasoning. Planning requirements in family day care settings are stipulated in chapter four (Family Day Care Specific Standards).

Program evaluation requirements for childcare centres are detailed, requirements regarding routines and rituals and equipment to support the program are also contained in this section.

Standards describing behaviour guidance practices and the management of inappropriate behaviour reflect the offence to unreasonably discipline a child (section 741 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008*) and the rights of children to be treated with respect and dignity are also included in this section.

Safety, Health and Hygiene (standards 1.61-1.108)

Standards in this section detail requirements to ensure the safety of children is monitored, including health and hygiene practices. These standards stipulate specific requirements for policies and procedures relating to this area including sun protection, individual health and food and nourishment.

Standards in this section also detail requirements for cleanliness and maintenance, safe environments, fire safety and smoke detectors, emergency procedures, electrical appliances and dangerous goods. Requirements regarding first aid, infectious conditions, medication, illness, accidents and incidents are also detailed.

Standards regarding requirements for adequate nutritious and varied food/nourishment, sleeping equipment, transportation, animals and plants are also detailed in this section.

2. Centre Based Care Specific Standards – summary of sections

All centre based care services must comply with the centre based care specific standards in addition to the core standards.

Staffing (standards 2.1-2.13)

Staffing requirements specific to centre based care services are detailed in this section. These standards are additional to the core staffing standards for all services. Standards including qualified staff, replacement of qualified staff, and the service director requirements including replacement of the director are described.

Standard 2.13 ensures the supervision of children is not compromised if staff are performing cleaning tasks.

Safety, Health and Hygiene (standard 2.14)

This standard requires the routine cleaning of each service.

Building and Physical Environment (standards 2.15-2.79)

Standards in this section describe the building and physical environment requirements for all centre based care services.

Standard 2.15 is a grandfathering clause which applies to existing services that are unable to meet one or more of the building requirements. These services are able to

apply an approved plan to mitigate the associated risk with this noncompliance and continue to operate. Should existing services renovate or extend they must meet the requirements of this section.

Standards in this section detail the minimum space and arrangement details for indoor and outdoor areas. They specify safety requirements in regard to water, fencing, entrances, heating and cooling, glass, waste disposal and play equipment. Standards in this section also stipulate requirements relating to bedding, nappy change, bathroom, food preparation and laundry facilities, indoor natural light and outdoor shade.

Excursions (standards 2.80-2.90)

This section details requirements about excursions for centre based care services. Standards in this section ensure there are adequate risk/hazard identification, assessment and management processes conducted for each excursion. Other standards require contingency planning, permission from parent/guardians and written records.

Staff: child ratios, staff qualifications and supervision for excursions, including to hazardous venues such as water, are detailed in this section. Standards specifying items staff must take with them during an excursion, and the provision of sleepovers and care outside the service's usual operating hours are included in this section.

3. School Age Care Specific Standards – summary of sections

All school age care services must comply with the school age care specific standards in addition to the core standards.

Staffing (standards 3.1-3.14)

Staffing requirements specific to school age care services are detailed in this section. These standards are additional to the core staffing standards for all services. Standards including additional qualification options to work in a qualified position at a school age care service and replacement of qualified staff are detailed in this section.

Standards stipulating the service director/coordinator requirements including replacement of director/coordinator are also in this section.

Building and Physical Environment (standards 3.15-3.51)

Standards in this section describe the building and physical environment requirements for all school age care services.

Standard 3.15 is a grandfathering clause which applies to existing services that are unable to meet one or more of the building requirements. These services are able to apply an approved plan to mitigate the associated risk with this noncompliance and continue to operate. Should existing services renovate or extend they must meet the requirements of this section.

Standards in this section detail the minimum space and arrangement details for indoor and outdoor areas including storage and shade provision. They specify safety requirements in regard to water, heating and cooling, glass, and waste disposal and play equipment. Standards in this section also stipulate requirements relating to bathroom, nappy change, and food preparation facilities.

Excursions (standards 3.52-3.70)

This section details requirements about excursions for school age care services. Standards in this section ensure there are adequate risk/hazard identification, assessment and management processes conducted for each excursion. Other standards require contingency planning, permission from parent/guardians and written records.

Staff: child ratios, staff qualifications and supervision for excursions, including to hazardous venues such as water, are detailed in this section. Standards specifying items staff must take with them during an excursion, and the provision of sleepovers and care outside the service's usual operating hours are included in this section.

Holiday Camps (3.71-3.91)

The provision of holiday camps is an option for licensed school age care services in the ACT. If a service plans to undertake a holiday camp, they must seek prior approval from the licensing authority and provide detail regarding how the service plans to meet the relevant *Act Childcare Services Standards*.

Standards in this section detail staffing, planning, safety, health and hygiene, and facilities requirements.

4. Family Day Care Specific Standards – summary of sections

All family day care services must comply with the family day care specific standards in addition to the core standards.

Staffing (4.1-4.5)

Staffing requirements specific to family day care services are detailed in this section. These standards are additional to the core staffing standards for all services. Standards including childcare worker competencies, co-carer arrangements and qualifications for coordination unit staff are detailed in this section.

Programming and Planning (4.6-4.10)

This section is in addition to the relevant standards in the core standards relating to programming and planning.

Standards in this section require a family day care scheme to develop and implement programming model/s which enable childcare workers to easily and efficiently meet programming requirements.

Standards in this section detail the factors childcare workers must consider while planning for children such as, flexibility, diversity, and respecting children's preferences and involves children in decisions about their participation. They also detail the opportunities children must be provided with whilst attending such as, building relationships and learning strategies for active exploration, taking risks, thinking and reasoning. Standard 4.10 highlights the evaluation of programs.

Safety, Health and Hygiene (standard 4.11)

This standard requires an annual safety check on each family day care home.

Physical Environment (standards 4.12-4.28)

Standards in this section describe the minimum physical requirements for any family day care home. They include space, storage, nappy change, bathroom, food preparation and laundry facilities. They specify safety requirements such as water, heating and cooling and glass.

Excursions (4.29-4.36)

No child should leave the family day care home they are attending without a parent/guardian's written permission. The standards in this section detail requirements for excursions including parental/guardian permission, safety, records, staff: child ratios including ratios for hazardous venues, supervision, and what must be taken on an excursion.

Management of the Scheme (4.37-4.2)

Standards in this section describe the requirements of the scheme in regard to responsibilities, functions and participation. These standards detail supervision and mentoring of childcare workers, supporting children and families and the role coordination unit.

5. Playschool Specific Standards – summary of sections

All playschools must comply with the playschool specific standards in addition to the core standards.

Staffing (standards 5.1-5.6)

Staffing requirements specific to playschools are detailed in this section. These standards are additional to the core staffing standards for all services. Standards including qualified staff and replacement of qualified staff are described.

Programming and Planning (standard 5.7)

This standard requires playschools to provide for the individual sleep/rest requirements of children attending the service if the service operates during usual rest periods (1:00 pm to 2:30 pm) or for extended sessions.

Building and Physical Environment (standards 5.8-5.55)

Standards in this section describe the building and physical environment requirements for all playschools.

Standard 5.8 is a grandfathering clause which applies to existing services that are unable to meet one or more of the building requirements. These services are able to apply an approved plan to mitigate the associated risk with this noncompliance and continue to operate. Should existing services renovate or extend they must meet the requirements of this section.

Standards in this section detail the minimum space and arrangement details for indoor and outdoor areas. They specify safety requirements in regard to water, fencing, entrances, heating and cooling, glass, waste disposal and play equipment. Standards in this section also stipulate requirements relating to bedding, nappy change, bathroom, food preparation and laundry facilities, indoor natural light and outdoor shade provisions.

Excursions (standards 5.56-5.66)

This section details requirements about excursions for playschools. Standards in this section ensure there are adequate risk/hazard identification, assessment and

management processes conducted for each excursion. Other standards require contingency planning, permission from parent/guardians and written records.

Staff: child ratios, staff qualifications and supervision for excursions, including to hazardous venues such as water, are detailed in this section. Standards specifying items staff must take with them during an excursion, and the provision of sleepovers and care outside the service's usual operating hours are included in this section.

6. Independent Preschool Specific Standards – summary of sections

All independent preschools must comply with the independent preschool specific standards in addition to the core standards.

Staffing (standards 6.1-6.8)

Staffing requirements specific to independent preschools are detailed in this section. These standards are additional to the core staffing standards for all services. Standards including qualified staff and replacement of qualified staff are described.

Programming and Planning (standard 6.9)

This standard requires independent preschools to provide for the individual sleep/rest requirements of children attending the service.

Building and Physical Environment (standards 6.10-6.58)

Standards in this section describe the building and physical environment requirements for all independent preschools.

Standard 6.11 is a grandfathering clause which applies to existing services that are unable to meet one or more of the building requirements. These services are able to apply an approved plan to mitigate the associated risk with this noncompliance and continue to operate. Should existing services renovate or extend they must meet the requirements of this section.

Standards in this section detail the minimum space and arrangement details for indoor and outdoor areas. They specify safety requirements in regard to water, fencing, entrances, heating and cooling, glass, waste disposal and play equipment. Standards in this section also stipulate requirements relating to bedding, nappy change, bathroom, food preparation and laundry facilities, indoor natural light and outdoor shade provisions.

Excursions (standards 6.59-6.69)

This section details requirements about excursions for independent preschools. Standards in this section ensure there are adequate risk/hazard identification, assessment and management processes conducted for each excursion. Other standards require contingency planning, permission from parent/guardians and written records.

Staff: child ratios, staff qualifications and supervision for excursions, including to hazardous venues such as water, are detailed in this section. Standards specifying items staff must take with them during an excursion, and the provision of sleepovers and care outside the service's usual operating hours are included in this section.