

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy

1. Policy Statement

Values

NERPSA is committed to:

- ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children attending the service
- meeting its duty of care obligations under the law.

Purpose

This policy outlines procedures to be followed when:

- obtaining written authorisation from a parent/guardian or person authorised and named in the enrolment record
- refusing written authorisation from a parent/guardian or person authorised and named in the enrolment record.

2. Scope

This policy applies to NERPSA, individual kindergartens within the NERPSA cluster, their committees and staff and parents/guardians who wish to have their children enrolled, or have children already enrolled at NERPSA.

3. Background and Legislation

Under the National Law and Regulations, early childhood services are required to obtain written authorisation from parents/guardians, and/or authorised nominees (refer to *Definitions*) in some circumstances, to ensure that the health, safety, wellbeing and best interests of the child are met. These circumstances include but are not limited to:

- self-administration of medication (Regulation 96)
- children leaving the service premises (Regulation 99)
- children being taken on excursions (Regulation 102).

Relevant legislation includes but is not limited to:

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic), as amended 2011
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic), as amended 2012
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 167
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 96, 99, 102, 160, 161, 168(2)(m), 170
- *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth), as amended 2011

4. Definitions

Attendance record: Kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering and collecting the child or of the Nominated Supervisor or educator (Regulation 158(1)).

Authorised nominee: (In relation to this policy) a person who has been given written authority by the parents/guardians of a child to collect that child from the education and care service. These details will be on the child's enrolment form.

Duty of care: A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

Inappropriate person: A person who may pose a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of any child attending the education and care service, or whose behaviour or state of mind make it inappropriate for him/her to be on the premises e.g. a person under the influence of drugs or alcohol (Act 171(3)).

Medication record: Contains details for each child to whom medication is to be administered by the service. This includes the child's name, signed authorisation to administer medication and a record of the medication administered, including time, date, dosage, manner of administration, name and signature of person administering the medication and of the person checking the medication, if required (Regulation 92).

5. Sources and Related NERPSA Policies

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au
- *Administration of Medication Policy*
- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*
- *Excursions Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy*

6. Procedures

NERPSA is responsible for:

- 6.1 Ensuring that there are procedures in place if an inappropriate person (refer to *Definitions*) attempts to collect a child from the service (refer to *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy* and *Child Safe Environment Policy*)
- 6.2 Developing and enacting procedures for dealing with a written authorisation that does not meet the requirements outlined in service policies (refer to Attachment 1).

Educators are responsible for:

- 6.3 Ensuring that medication is not administered to a child without the authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised nominee, except in the case of an emergency, including an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency (refer to *Administration of Medication Policy*, *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*, *Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy*, *Emergency Policy*, *Asthma Policy* and *Anaphylaxis Policy*)
- 6.4 Ensuring a child only departs from the service with a person who is the parent/guardian or authorised nominee, or with the written or phone authorisation of one of these, except in the case of a medical or other emergency (refer to *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy* and *Child Safe Environment Policy*)
- 6.5 Ensuring a child is not taken outside the service premises on an excursion except with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised nominee (refer to *Excursions Policy*)
- 6.6 Following procedures if an inappropriate person (refer to *Definitions*) attempts to collect a child from the service (refer to *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy* and *Child Safe Environment Policy*)

Parents/ guardians are responsible for:

- 6.7 Reading and complying with the policies and procedures of the service

- 6.8 Completing and signing the authorised nominee section (refer to *Definitions*) of their child's enrolment form (refer to *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*) before their child commences at the service
- 6.9 Signing and dating permission forms for excursions
- 6.10 Signing the attendance record (refer to *Definitions*) as their child arrives at and departs from the service
- 6.11 Providing written authorisation where children require medication to be administered by educators, and signing and dating it for inclusion in the child's medication record (refer to *Definitions*).

7. Evaluation

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

- Seek feedback regarding the effectiveness of the policy
- 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.

8. Authorisation

The policy was adopted by NERPSA on 19th March 2013.

9. Review date

The policy will be reviewed every three years from date of adoption.

Attachments

- Procedures for refusing a written authorisation

ATTACHMENT

Procedures for refusing a written authorisation

On receipt of a written authorisation from a parent/guardian that does not meet the requirements outlined in the related service policy, the service will:

- immediately explain to the parent/guardian that their written authorisation contravenes service policy, and that it cannot be accepted
- ensure that the parent/guardian is provided with a copy of the relevant service policy and that they understand the reasons for the refusal of the authorisation
- request that an appropriate alternative written authorisation is provided by the parent/guardian that complies with the requirements of the relevant service policy
- ensure that procedures outlined in the relevant service policy are followed where a parent/guardian cannot be immediately contacted to provide an alternative written authorisation
- follow up with the parent/guardian, where required, to ensure that an appropriate written authorisation is obtained.