



The OSCAR Programme Supervision Manual

 **OSCN**
Out of School Care Network

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1. Working in OSCAR

As a staff member in an OSCAR (Out of School Care and Recreation) service, a big part of your job is to “watch the kids”.

There are all sorts of reasons why your supervision role is important:

- Preventing accidents and injuries
- Recognising and responding to children’s changing needs
- Preparing transitions to different stages in the daily programme or routine
- Observing interactions between children
- Monitoring the actions of other people in the facility
- Safeguarding property and facilities

Supervision isn’t just looking on while children play and undertake activities. It requires your active involvement:

- Interacting with children – asking questions, making conversation
- Providing encouragement, feedback and guidance where needed
- Anticipating when an activity may need to change and taking appropriate action
- Acting immediately, where there is likely to be an accident or injury

Your supervision role is important and it is a skill that can be developed and improved. This resource will increase your awareness of your legal and professional obligations. It will also help you to become a more effective member of your programme team, and promote positive “real life learning” experiences for the children who you work with.

Children are continually learning – not just in school time – and they are very influenced by the environment and people around them. OSCAR services make a significant contribution to children’s learning and development in their “out of school” time. A big part of that impact will be a result of your involvement, attention and interest.

Getting ready to supervise – a first checklist

To be effective as a supervisor, these are the first steps you should take:

- Get to know the programme facility, including physical boundaries such as “out of bounds areas” and outdoor boundaries
- Go through the programme rules, including what children need permission for e.g. helping themselves to a ball, going to the toilet, going outside etc.
- Make sure you understand what to do if there’s an emergency, including which staff are responsible for first aid
- Learn children’s names, as well as who has special needs, medical conditions or allergies
- Read your job description and other employment documents carefully.
- Be ready to ask questions or get help when you aren’t sure what to do

2. “Being their friend”

Getting to know children and building positive relationships is a big part of your role. It is quite normal to want to get along with the children in your programme but that doesn’t mean “being a friend” to them. At times you will need to be firm and use some authority - for example, if children are playing in an out of bounds area. At times like this you will want children to respect that you are an adult responsible for their care and to co-operate with programme rules and behaviour expectations.

Being “too friendly” or frequently behaving “like one of the kids” can make it harder for you to carry out your programme responsibilities. That doesn’t mean you can’t have fun, joke around or sometimes just act like a kid. Interactions that are courteous, respectful, but also fun and informal (friendly and warm), help to make a happy programme where children feel acceptance and belonging.

Part of what will help you to develop healthy professional relationships is to set personal boundaries. Some of your personal information should be kept private. Don’t interact with the children in your programme on social media or engage in on-line chat with them. If you know any of the children outside of the programme (maybe as a baby sitter or family friend), then don’t show any favouritism towards them at the programme.

Refer to your programme’s code of conduct (or look at ours, using the link at the end of this booklet) to learn more about professional practice in an OSCAR service.

3. Programme supervision principles

- Always position yourself (seated or standing) so you can best see all the children. Scan the whole area regularly; monitor the comings and goings.
- If you join in on an activity, make sure that good overall supervision can still be maintained.
- If you leave the area you are supervising, ensure it is safe to go:
 - either ask another staff member to cover for you
 - or move the children to another place where they will still be supervised.
- In an emergency, respond without creating a risk of further injury - maintain the best possible supervision of the whole area. Stay calm and seek assistance if needed.
- Your duty of care requires that you stop the activity immediately if you can see there is a likelihood of injury. Do not allow the activity to re-start until it can continue safely.
- Monitor other adults who come into the programme - if you are unsure who a person is, then approach them, introduce yourself and ask if you can be of help.
- Any adult leaving the programme with a child must be clearly identified as an "authorised person" for that child and sign the child out. Please remind parents/care givers to sign their children in when arriving and out when leaving.
- If you have concerns about a person collecting a child, act immediately and notify other staff.
- Inform your supervisor as soon as possible if there are any injuries, incidents, dangerous behaviour, unsafe equipment etc.

YOU ARE THE EYES AND EARS OF THE PROGRAMME

4. What are your programme safety rules? (examples only)

Our main safety rules are:

- Walking inside
- No climbing except on playground equipment
- Large balls always used outside
- Sitting when eating
- Sunsmart (summer) – no hat / no outside play
- Shoes on at all times, when outside

What are the physical boundaries at your programme?

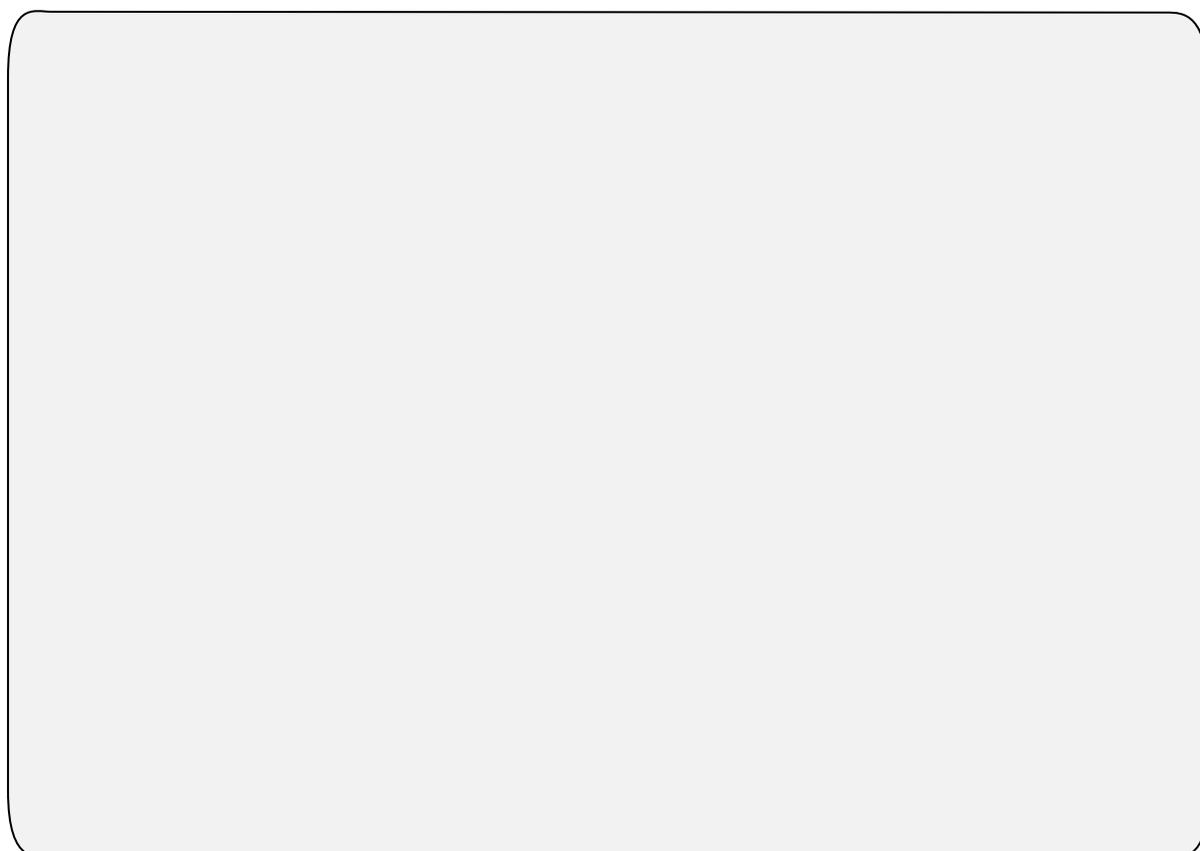
Programme activity and play areas

a) indoors:

b) outdoors:

Out of bound areas:

Facility map / boundaries:



5. Duty of Care

“A DUTY TO USE DUE CARE TOWARD OTHERS IN ORDER TO PROTECT THEM FROM UNNECESSARY RISK OF HARM.”

(MARTINDALE-HUBBELL LAW DIRECTORY)

As staff members in an OSCAR programme, you and your colleagues have a duty of care towards the children who attend. This continues for as long as children are at the programme. For example, if a child has not been collected from the programme after it has closed, staff still have a duty of care for that child.

When a parent enrolls their child, the programme forms a legal agreement with the parent. They entrust us with the care of their child and the programme takes on legal and professional responsibilities. Sign in and sign out procedures make it clear that the programme is accepting duty of care and also that responsibility will be returned to the parent/caregiver.

Responsibility for safety and supervision is usually shared by all programme staff and you will often be given specific activities, areas or groups to be responsible for. Give these tasks your full attention and ensure that you understand what safety procedures apply. These procedures help minimise the risk of accidents and guide you in keeping children stay safe during the programme. If you have any questions or concerns, it is your responsibility to ask for advice or assistance.

“Negligence” refers to a breach of duty of care. Organisations and individual staff may be liable, if there was harm caused by an incident, action or inaction that was reasonably foreseeable or preventable.

It is normal and desirable for children to be active and adventurous in their play. Accidents and injuries are unfortunate but also a normal part of a child’s development. It is not possible to eliminate all risk of injury but consistent supervision of children’s activities is essential; as is knowing when to step in to stop or re-direct activity.

Good judgment in these matters can only be gained through experience and training. Get to know warning signs and don’t hesitate to act.

The Social Sector Accreditation Standards for OSCAR

The OSCAR sector has its own standards (administered by Te Kahui Kaha, the social sector accreditation agency) which outline the requirements for running a programme. The standards specify, among other things:

- Staffing ratios and the minimum age of staff to be included in ratios
- Requirements for regular safety checks and fire drills
- Procedures for enrolling children, daily registers, late collections etc.
- Facility requirements, including suitable space for a range of children’s activities
- Policies for encouraging positive behaviour, and a positive, child-centred environment

The standards also require that an OSCAR service makes an over-riding commitment to child safety and wellbeing, and to take appropriate steps where there are concerns about the abuse or mistreatment of a child.

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