

Intereach Children Services Walkie Talkie Procedure



Applies to	Intereach Out of School Hours (OOSH)				
Policy	NQS Two: Children's Health and Safety Policy				
Version	1.0	Date approved	19/5/2022	Next review date	19/5/2025

1. Objective

The objective of this procedure is to provide a service specific procedure in supporting the use of walkie talkie as a method of communication to ensure the children, and educators are kept safe at all times adhering to Intereach Privacy Policy, Children Services Supervision Procedure and Facilities and Equipment Procedure.

2. Definition

A 'Walkie Talkie' is a two-way radio transceiver which is an approved tool for communication in a children services environment for outdoor activities. The use of these devices enhances communication between educators to strengthen supervision of children, child safety, and to maintain supervision ratios (required child to staff ratios).

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Nominated Supervisor to:

- ensure a risk assessment tool is available and control measures are in place for the use of walkie talkies, including privacy;
- ensure relevant details of all Walkie Talkies including, date of purchase, serial numbers etc are maintained;
- ensure walkie talkies are securely stored and privacy codes are kept confidential;
- ensure Walkie Talkies are operational and appropriate charging equipment is available;
- train and support use of security word and common lingo to educators through induction and team meetings

It is the responsibility of the Responsible Person (RP) of the day to:

- be accountable for the walkie talkies and consult the Nominated Supervisor if support is required;
- allocate Walkie Talkies to educators for the day and ensure walkie talkies are returned to the charge station at the end of each shift; and,
- ensure the walkie talkies are fully charged for the next use.

It is the responsibility of educators and staff to:

- utilise Walkie Talkie as a communication method for effective supervision of all children participating in their area/activities;
- ensure children have no access to the walkie talkies;
- follow clear communication and two-way radio protocol outlined within this procedure;
- report any issues relating to Walkie Talkies as soon as practicable; and,
- ensure Walkie Talkies are secure.

4. Procedure

4.1. Allocation

- Walkie talkies will be used by the educators during their shifts on the floor at OOSH and during regular excursions within close proximity to the centre.
- Educators are to collect the walkie talkies for the shift from the charge station in consultation with the Responsible Person of the day.
- Educators must return the walkie talkies to the charge station in consultation with the RP at the end of their shift.

4.2. Communication

- Communication whilst using a Walkie Talkie must be respectful, clear, and concise, adhering to Intereach Values, policies and Procedures;
- Careful attention is paid to ensure only appropriate language is transmitted.
- Walkie Talkies should not be used for casual or private conversation.
- It helps the two-way radio communication when everyone understands and uses similar language and etiquette, especially when there are more than two people using the channel. E.g., “Thank you all done/ over” - Say Again – Repeat your last message.

4.3. Confidentiality

- Privacy and confidentiality are maintained at all times.
- When referring to a child or educator, use only their first name.
- When referring to locations, never use the address, instead use a title such as St Micks, backyard, front yard, excursion location.
- Know your communication is never private, anyone who has a two-way radio can be keyed into your channel, even when you use privacy codes.

4.4. Use of Walkie Talkie

4.4.1. Be prepared

It is important to think about the message beforehand.

When the talk button is pressed, no one else in the group can speak or be heard, two-way radios are mostly a one-at-a-time system of communication and cannot interrupt or talk over each other.

If the talk button is pressed whilst a person is composing their thoughts, not only is this preventing anyone else joining in the conversation, it may be blocking someone on the frequency with an emergency message to transmit. This will also reduce the battery life.

4.4.2. Identify yourself and the recipient of your message

It is important to identify yourself immediately with the use of your first name and the security code word followed by the staff member’s first name you are requesting and the code word. E.g. “It is Cath + the Security Code, are you available Karen +Security Code”. The use of the security code with the first name will clarify it is your team member as there may be a group of users all sharing the same radio channel when you initiate a transmission.

All OOSH educators will be informed of the security code words during their initial induction and at the daily handover or upon review at regular team meetings.

4.4.3. Be patient

The other person may not be able to respond immediately – be patient and give them time to reply before re-sending your call.

4.4.4. Use short, clear, and concise messages

Keep your transmissions short, clear and to the point. This gives other users an opportunity to acknowledge your message or request further clarification before you carry on with your next point.

4.4.5. Pause before speaking

There can be a short delay before the radio commence transmission. This could result in your first couple of words being cut off, so wait a second or two before speaking to be sure your listeners receive your whole message.

4.5. Emergency situations

Educators and staff carry Walkie Talkies with them during Emergency Situations.

5. Context	
5.1. Standards or other external requirements	Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (2017), National Quality Standards Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (2017), Guide to the National Quality Framework Early Childhood Australia (2016). Code of Ethics Australian Government, Department of Education, Child Care Provider Handbook (Priority of access - prioritising vacancies), Accessed November 2019 from https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook/managing-child-care-places NSW Privacy Laws, Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) and Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW). Accessed November 2019 from https://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/privacy
5.2. Legislation or other requirements	Education and Care Services National Regulations consolidated 2017 (Currency of version 1.10.22) Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
5.3. Reference Internal documents	Intereach Code of Conduct policy Privacy policy Child safe policy Children Services Children’s Health and Safety policy Physical Environment Policy Staffing arrangement policy Providing a child safe environment procedure Missing child procedure Supervision Procedure OOSH Risk Management and Quality Plan

6. Document control			
Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
1.0	19/05/2022	M.Tai – General Manager Operations	19/05/2025