

Onsite Monitoring Checklist

The Office of the Children's Guardian is responsible for regulating VOOHC agencies' adherence to legislation and the *Statutory Procedures: Voluntary Out-of-Home Care in NSW*. This Checklist is designed to assist agencies in preparing evidence for Onsite Monitoring Reviews.

1. Care Environment

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider each VOOHC care environment to ensure that it is comfortable, safe, well maintained and homelike. Evidence considered includes:

- Reviews of rooms to confirm they are clean, private and personalised (i.e. photos)
- Safety checklists of each VOOHC outlet
- WHS evacuation maps and fire safety signage
- Evidence of a clear policy in relation to staff smoking
- Confirmation that the hot water is regulated
- First aid kit and related documentation to confirm the kit is regularly reviewed
- The security of the storage of any medication
- Vehicle maintenance and standards (including car seats)
- Procedures for responding to vehicle accidents that are accessible.
- Swimming pool registration, inspections and compliance

2. Intake and Assessment

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider information gathered by the agency at intake and the assessment of that information to confirm that the agency is able to meet the support needs of the child/young person and their family. Evidence includes:

- Completed intake forms
- Consent forms
- Service agreements
- Intake meeting notes
- Letters confirming placement
- Evidence of information exchange regarding the child/young person's needs
- Risk assessments and risk management plans
- Placement matching assessments
- Staff training/ staff meeting minutes regarding the specific needs of a child/young person

3. Principles of Care

General

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider an agency's engagement with the children/young people and their families (and collaboration with other service providers) to identify support needs, compatibility requirements, and to promote the ongoing involvement of families in day to day care and decision making. Evidence considered includes:

- Completed intake forms (and meeting minutes where applicable)
- Placement matching assessments and any related risk assessments and management plans
- Service agreements
- File notes of telephone discussions with families and other service providers
- Consent forms
- Children/young person plans with a family centred approach
- Communication books
- Client files
- NDIS plans
- Documentation of formal information exchange with other agencies
- The VOOHC Register's Placement History Function
- Evidence of information being stored securely and confidentially.

Complaints

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider an agency's complaint process to assess whether children/young people and their parent(s) are aware of and have access to fair and equitable procedures for dealing with complaints and disputes concerning VOOHC, including avenues of appeal. Evidence considered includes:

- The agency's complaints register
- Intake and assessment checklists
- Review of progress notes to see whether complaints have been identified
- Incident reports to see whether complaints have been identified
- Communication books to see whether complaints have been identified
- Complaints brochures and posters
- Team meeting minutes/ staff training/ supervision notes confirming training in complaint handling
- Documentation of liaison with Police and/or DCJ when complaint concerns reach the criminal threshold or ROSH

Behaviour Support

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider the agency's response to the behaviour support needs of children and young people to ensure that there is a positive approach to behaviour support, that behaviour support plans are structured and developed to meet individual need, and that the plans are regularly reviewed and have appropriate consent. Evidence considered includes:

- Individual behaviour support plans on client files
- Evidence of consent to the implementation of the plan by both the parent(s) and the agency
- Staff training attendance sheets
- Team meetings minutes
- Behaviour data collection sheets
- Documentation regarding the review/assessment of behaviour data
- Behaviour support review meetings and plan reviews

In addition, for VOOHC agencies registered with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (the Commission)

- Documentation related to registration with the Commission to implement behaviour support plans with restrictive practices
- Behaviour support plans to confirm that each plan with restrictive practices is registered with the Commission and that the agency is registered to implement each individual plan.
- Documentation confirming that behaviour support plans with restrictive practices are developed by clinicians registered with the Commission
- Outcome summaries submitted to the DCJ Restrictive Practices Portal and records of approval (or any other confirmation of Restrictive Practices Panel approval)
- Monthly reports to the Commission regarding the use of restrictive practices
- Progress notes and behaviour data
- Notifications of any unauthorised use of restrictive practices to the Commission as a reportable incident.

4. Child Safe Organisation

Staff Recruitment and Training

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider the agency's recruitment, training and probity practices to identify how the agency ensures that its staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to support children/young people and are child safe. Evidence considered includes:

- An audit of the agency's Working With Children Check verification compliance
- A review of staff files
- Signed Codes of Conduct
- Staff induction checklists
- Staff training certificates and training attendance sheets
- Staff supervision minutes
- Staff rosters
- Team meeting minutes
- Staff sign offs of policy and plan reads

Prevention/Risk Management

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider how the agency manages its mandatory reporting responsibilities and educates children and young people about abuse and neglect and how to report concerns. Evidence considered includes:

- Incident reports
- Progress notes
- Evidence of the use of Mandatory Reporting Guide
- House meeting minutes with children and young people
- Complaints register
- Planning documents
- Staff training in Child Safe Standards and Child Protection
- Interviews with staff

Child Protection

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider how the agency has implemented policies and procedures for responding to child protection concerns. Evidence considered includes:

- Progress notes
- Behaviour data
- Complaint files
- Incident reports
- Progress notes/file notes of evidence of reports or discussions with Police and/or DCJ
- Review of reportable conduct files
- Review of any Chapter 16A releases regarding the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a child/young person

In addition, for VOOHC agencies registered with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (the Commission)

- Review of reportable incident files, including feedback from the Commission.

5. VOOHC Register

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider the timeliness and accuracy of the data entered onto the VOOHC Register and how the agency self-assesses the accuracy of the data. Evidence considered includes:

- Agency Quarterly Activity Reports (QARs)
- The VOOHC Register
- Evidence of the use of the Placement History Function to facilitate information exchange
- Interview the VOOHC Coordinator
- Client files
- Intake forms
- Booking sheets/diaries and progress notes to confirm that all placements have been entered onto the VOOHC Register.

6. Information Exchange

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider evidence of collaboration with other agencies regarding the health and wellbeing of children and young people in VOOHC and how this information is stored. Evidence considered includes:

- Evidence of information exchange with other agencies (including schools, health etc), including documented approval of the release.
- Filing systems (computer based and physical)
- File notes/communication books of discussions with other agencies
- The security of storage and access to the information.

7. Case Planning

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider evidence of case planning for children/young people staying in VOOHC for longer periods of time. The Children's Guardian considers whether the case plans were developed in a timely manner, consider the needs and wishes of the child/young person and their family, cover all domains of care and consider future aspirations and goals, have the appropriate consent, and are reviewed on a regular basis. Evidence considered includes:

- Child/young person files
- Case plans
- Case Meeting Minutes
- VOOHC Register flags
- Case plan reviews and assessments
- Evidence that the Children's Guardian has been promptly advised when the case plan has been closed.

8. Supervision

The Office of the Children's Guardian will consider how registered agencies promptly contact designated agencies registered to provide supervision and work with that agency to support children and young people accessing VOOHC for over 90 days in a 12-month period. Evidence considered includes:

- Client files
- VOOHC Register
- Supervision Agreements
- Supervision meeting minutes
- Documentation related to the parents being advised of the supervision arrangement
- Evidence that the Children's Guardian has been notified of any situation where a child/young person was in VOOHC for more than 90 days in a 12-month period without a supervising arrangement (where relevant)