

Policy:	Care of Children and Young People in Council Facilities
Department:	Community Services
Approved by:	Policy and Services Committee
Effective date:	12 June 2024
Next review date:	2026/27
Document Number:	D24/17125

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the policy is to provide guidance for Council facility staff and users when children and young people are unaccompanied and/or not actively supervised in Stratford District Council facilities.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all facility users during opening hours and may have greater significance during school hours.
- 2.2 This policy may not be applied where a child has registered for a programme run by the Council facility.
- 2.3 For the purposes of this policy, caregivers must be 16 years and older.

3. Objectives

- 3.1 Council staff will do their utmost to provide a safe and comfortable environment for all children and young people.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 Unaccompanied child refers to any child whose parent/caregiver is not within the Council facility.
- 4.2 Actively supervised means that the parent/caregiver has the child within eyesight, is watching and ensuring the child is safe and is not disrupting staff or other facility users.
- 4.3 Registered for a programme means that Council has asked for: Emergency Contact Name, Emergency Contact's Relationship to Child, Emergency Contact Phone Number, and an Alternative Contact for Picking Up the Child.

5. Principles

- 5.1 Children and young people are welcomed by the Council to use its resources, services and spaces in a safe and respectful manner. The Council encourages all children and young people to use the facilities, its resources, and to participate in programmes.
- 5.2 All facility users including children and young people must treat other users, staff, and property with respect and care. Failing to do so may result in being asked to leave the facility.
- 5.3 Parents or caregivers are responsible for the safety and behaviour of their children and young people, and under law as per the Summary Offences Act 1981 must make reasonable provision for the care and supervision of their children.
- 5.4 Council recognises it is reasonable to expect:
- children aged 9 and over to visit the Wai o Rua - Stratford Aquatic Centre on their own.
 - children aged 8 and over to visit the Stratford Library on their own.

- 5.5 Action may be taken by Council staff if they consider that supervision of a child or young person is inadequate, which may be in relation to a child's age or behaviour.
- 5.6 Council staff will act on any reasonable concerns about the care or safety of children or young people in its facilities.

6. Procedure

- 6.1 Unaccompanied or unsupervised children of school age during school hours may be asked the circumstances under which they are not attending school.
- 6.2 Where Council staff have reasonable concerns about the care, safety or behaviour of a child in a Council facility staff will act. This may include contacting the parent/guardian, school or if necessary, Police.
- 6.3 Police may be contacted if the caregiver or supervising adult cannot be found or contacted, particularly if the unaccompanied child is in distress.

7. Relevant Legislation

- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Children, Young Persons and Their Families (Oranga Tamariki) Legislation Act 2017
- Children's Act 2014
- Vulnerable Children Act 2014
- Education Act 1989
- Summary Offences Act 1981

8. Relevant Policies

- Child Protection Policy