WATER SAFETY POLICY

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to managing water safety including any activity involving water play, excursions near water, safety around hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the Service environment. Children will be supervised at all times during water play experiences to help keep children safe in and around water and support children's learning in a safe environment.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS/EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
Sec. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Sec. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
25(1)(c)	Additional information about proposed education and care services premises
12	Meaning of a serious incident
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursions
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
126	Centre based services-general educator qualifications
168(2)(a)(iii)	Education and care service must have policies and procedures in relation to- Water safety, including safety during any water-based activities
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
176	Time to notify the certain information to the Regulatory Authority

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Educational Program Policy Excursion/Incursion Policy	Health and Safety Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Physical Environment Policy Supervision Policy UV/Sun Safe Policy

PURPOSE

To ensure the safety and supervision of children in and around water. This includes water play, excursions near water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the Service environment.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors (including contractors) of the Service.

WATER HAZARDS

The National Regulations make reference to '*water hazards'* however the term is not expressly defined. In this policy, a water hazard is defined as anything that can hold 5cm of water and fit a child's nose and mouth and a 'water hazard' may include:

- large bodies of water such as dams, creeks, river or pooling water, swimming pool, portable pools and spas, jetted bathtubs (or Jacuzzis)
- fishponds
- smaller bodies of water such as baths, mop buckets
- sinks, basins
- water features, such as a wishing well
- containers for feeding animals
- water troughs, containers for paddling- clam shells
- beach

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, an Approved Provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for managing water safety, including during any water-based activities and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.

According to Kidsafe, drowning is one of the leading causes of unintentional death for Australian children. Every year a number of children are killed and hundreds more rescued from near drowning situations. Non-fatal drowning incidents are also of great concern as they can have potential long-term effects, including brain damage and permanent disability.

The most common factor in childhood drowning is lack of supervision. A child can drown in as little as a few centimetres of water. Items such as nappy buckets, sinks, pet drinking bowls, ponds, pools, water features, water tanks are all potential drowning hazards. [source: Kidsafe]

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/ RESPONSIBLE PERSON WILL:

- adhere to all obligations under the *Education and Care National Law and Regulations*
- ensure educators, staff, students and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- complete detailed risk assessments that identify and assess risks associated with any water hazards and water-based activities
- ensure adequate supervision is provided when participating in water activities including:
  - direct and constant monitoring of children
  - careful and intentional positioning of educators
  - scanning and moving around the environment
  - observing play and anticipating behaviour
  - ensuring no child is left unattended when in proximity to water
- provide direction and education to educators, staff and families on the importance of children's safety and supervision in and around water
- ensure health and safety practices incorporate approaches to safe storage of water and water play
- ensure premises adjacent to or providing access to any water hazards that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times (e.g. dams, swimming pool) are to be isolated from children by a child resistant barrier or fence
- ensure there are no items near fencing that children could climb up onto to gain access to a water hazard (pot plants, boxes, chairs)
- conduct a risk assessment in accordance with Reg. 101 prior to taking children on an excursion- consider any water hazards and any risks associated with water-based activities before an excursion/incursion is approved

- ensure at least one educator who holds current approved first aid qualifications, that was attained within the previous three years (Reg. 136), is in attendance at the Service at all times
- ensure at least one educator has successfully completed cardiopulmonary resuscitation training (CPR) each year, is in attendance at the Service at all times
- display a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) guide near any swimming pool, wading pool, or body of water
- ensure hot water is inaccessible to children, including hot drinks accessed by educators, staff or families
- ensure the regulatory authority is notified within 24 hours of becoming aware of a serious incident.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- provide active supervision when children are participating in water activities including:
    - supervise children near water at all times
    - never leave children alone near any water
    - direct and constant monitoring of children
    - scanning and moving around the environment
    - observing play and anticipating behaviour
- ensure fish / frog ponds and water features that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times and/or pose an unacceptable risk to children are guarded or effective barriers are in place
- complete a daily Safety Inspection of premises to ensure that all hazards are known and minimised When a hazard or potential hazard is detected, educators will complete a risk assessment to address any concerns and children will be excluded from the area until the hazard has been rectified.
- utilise water activities in appropriate weather as part of the planned program
- allow the children the opportunity to experiment with water, sand, and mixing materials.
- incorporate water safety awareness into the educational program
- monitor all taps on the premises that children have access to and ensure they are turned off securely when not in use
- safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers, e.g. mop buckets, nappy buckets
- empty wading pools immediately after every use and store to prevent the collection of water, e.g., upright
- check for and empty any water that has collected in holes or containers after rainfall or watering gardens
- ensure water troughs are not used without a stand to keep it off the ground
- ensure children remain standing on the ground whilst using the water trough

- ensure buckets of water for soaking toys or clothing are inaccessible to children
- ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level and emptied into the garden areas after each use
- discourage children from drinking from any water activities for health and safety
- ensure laundry, storerooms and educator areas are to have Staff only signs on doors to remind adults to close doors behind them
- teach children about staying safe in and around water
- ensure wading pools are hygienically cleaned, disinfected and chlorinated appropriately:
    - ✓ on a daily basis remove leaves and debris, hose away surface dirt and scrub inside with disinfectant
    - ✓ wash away disinfectant before filling pool
    - ✓ add Chlorine to pool before children used the pool
    - ✓ check chlorine levels frequently
    - ✓ children with diarrhoea, upset stomach, open sores or nasal infections should not use the pool
    - ✓ all children should wear appropriate swimwear / bathers, go to the toilet before entering the pool, and follow correct toilet hygiene practices while in the pool
    - ✓ remove all children immediately, empty and disinfect the pool should a child pass a bowel motion whilst in the pool

OPERATIONAL SAFETY

- Educators will discuss with the children the use of water tank water and how it differs from drinking water
- Hot water accessible to children will be maintained at the temperature of 45.C° which will be tested annually. (Australian standard AS 3498)
- Hot drinks are not to be consumed near children by educators, students or visitors

Important: Parents will be notified as soon as practicable but within 24 hours if their child is involved in an incident/accident at the Service or while under Service care. Details of the incident/accident will be recorded on an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record.

Regulation 176: If the incident/accident situation, or event presents imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of the child or if an ambulance was called in response to the emergency (not as a precaution) the regulatory authority will be notified within 24 hours. Educators will follow

emergency procedures and contact emergency services if a child appears to be missing or unaccounted for or is involved in a serious incident or accident.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Water Safety Policy* will be updated and reviewed annually in consultation with families, staff, educators and management.

CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP- RELATED RESOURCES

Water Safety Procedure

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). *Guide to the National Quality Framework.*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). Policy and procedure guidelines- *Water Safety Guidelines*
Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023)
KidSafe (2021). Water Safety. https://kidsafe.com.au/water-safety/
National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC): www.nhmrc.gov.au
Victoria Government. Better Health Channel. Water safety for children.

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Krystle Hills	Manager	25/09/2024
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	SEPTEMBER 2025
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy maintenance - no major changes to policy • minor formatting edits within text • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
October 2023	• regular policy maintenance to ensure compliance and contains up to date 'best practice' • sources updated • related resources added		September 2024