

WATER SAFETY POLICY

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to water play, excursions near water, 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
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
345	Swimming pools prohibition (Tasmania only)

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy	Physical Environment Policy
Excursion/Incursion Policy	Supervision 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, management and visitors of the Service.

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 troughs/tub water tanks are all potential drowning hazards.

[<https://kidsafe.com.au/water-safety/>]

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:

1. large bodies of water such as dams, creeks, river or pooling water, swimming pool, portable pools and spas, jetted bathtubs (or Jacuzzis)

2. fishponds
3. smaller bodies of water such as baths, mop buckets
4. sinks, basins
5. water features, such as a wishing well
6. containers for feeding animals
7. water troughs, containers for paddling- clam shells
8. beach
9. Puddles

MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/ RESPONSIBLE PERSON WILL:

1. complete detailed risk assessments that identify and assess risks associated with any water hazards and water-based activities
2. ensure water hazards and water play are always highly supervised including:
 1. direct and constant monitoring of children
 2. careful and intentional positioning of educators
 3. scanning and moving around the environment
 4. observing play and anticipating behaviour
 5. ensuring higher adult to child ratios
 6. ensuring no child is left unattended when in proximity to water
7. provide direction and education to educators, staff and families on the importance of children's safety and supervision in and around water
8. ensure health and safety practices incorporate approaches to safe storage of water and water play
9. 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
10. ensure there are no items near fencing that children could climb up onto to gain access to a water hazard (pot plants, boxes, chairs)
11. conduct a risk assessment in accordance with Regulation 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

12. ensure at least one educator who holds a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance at the service at all times
13. display a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) guide near any swimming pool, wading pool, or body of water
14. ensure water hazards and water play are always highly supervised
15. ensure hot water is inaccessible to children.

EDUCATORS WILL:

1. supervise children near water at all times
2. never leave children alone near any water
3. ensure children in a bath (if required) are directly supervised at all times
4. 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
5. 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.

6. utilise water activities in appropriate weather as part of the planned program
7. allow the children the opportunity to experiment with water, sand, and mixing materials.
8. incorporate water safety awareness into the educational program
9. monitor all taps on the premises that children have access to and ensure they are turned off securely when not in use
10. safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers, e.g. mop buckets.
11. empty wading pools immediately after every use and store to prevent the collection of water, e.g., upright
12. check for and empty any water that has collected in holes or containers after rainfall or watering gardens
13. ensure buckets of water for soaking toys or clothing are inaccessible to children
14. ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level and emptied into the garden areas after **each** use
15. discourage children from drinking from these water activities (as above)
16. teach children about staying safe in and around water

17. ensure wading pools and troughs are hygienically cleaned and disinfected appropriately when used:
 1. before use hose away surface dirt and scrub inside with disinfectant
 2. wash away disinfectant before filling tub/trough
 3. children with diarrhoea, upset stomach, open sores or nasal infections should not participate in water play

OPERATIONAL SAFETY

1. Hot water accessible to children will be maintained at the temperature of 45.C° which will be tested annually. (Australian standard AS 3498)
2. Water for pets at the Service must be changed daily and only be accessible to children when educators are present.

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.

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.

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
ACECQA. (2021). Policy and procedure guidelines- *Water Safety Guidelines*
Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011)
Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations (2017).
Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).
KidSafe (2021). Water Safety. <https://kidsafe.com.au/water-safety/>
National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC): www.nhmrc.gov.au
NSW Department of Health: www.health.nsw.gov.au
Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).
Victoria Government. Better Health Channel. Water safety for children.

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY:	Nikia Nankervis	Centre Manager	05/03/2024
POLICY REVIEWED	MARCH 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	MARCH 2025
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor formatting edits • Sources checked for currency 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		
DECEMBER 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed for currency • Policy reviewed and included suggested guidelines from ACECQA Water Safety Policy Guidelines (June 2021) • Additional legislative requirements added • Additional related policies • Additional information from KidSafe re: water safety included • information related to risk assessments for excursions considering water hazards added • deleted 'nappy' bucket and replaced to 'mop bucket' 		

WATER SAFETY PROCEDURE

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to water play, excursions near water, 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.

Working in conjunction with the *Water Safety Policy*, this procedure outlines details to ensure the safety of children in and around water.

Education and Care Services National Law or Regulations (s165, 167. R21 (1)(c), 101,115, 122, 126, 168 (2) (a)(iii), 170, 274, 345)
NQS QA 2: Element 2.1.2, 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2. Children's Health and Safety
Related Policy: Water Safety Policy

WATER SAFETY PROCEDURE	
1	The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators will review the Service's <i>Water Safety Policy</i> every 12 months to ensure an awareness of appropriate practices to ensure children's safety in and around water.
2	A Risk Assessment will be completed to identify and assess risks associated with any water hazards and water-based activities
3	A Risk Assessment will be completed prior to taking children on an excursion, with consideration to any water hazards or water-based activities before the excursion/incursion is approved
4	The Approved Provider and educators will ensure health and safety practices incorporate approaches to safe storage of water and water play
5	The Approved Provider and educators will ensure that all staff are made aware of any potential water hazards that cannot be fenced off from children (ie the frog pond at the dog park and large puddles of water in the school yard) and are adequately supervised at all times whilst children are in the area
6	The Approved Provider and educators will ensure there are no items near fencing that children could climb up onto to gain access to a water hazard
7	The Approved Provider will ensure an educator who holds a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance at the service at all times
8	A current Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) guide is to be displayed in the staff room
9	Water hazards and water play are to be always highly supervised
10	The Approved Provider and educators will ensure hot water is inaccessible to children
11	Children are not to be left alone near any water, including children in a bath

12	Water Safety Awareness will be incorporated into the educational program to assist to teach children about staying safe in and around water	
13	Educators will monitor all taps that are accessible to children to ensure they are turned off securely when not in use	
14	Educators will ensure wading pools are emptied immediately after use and prevent the collection of water and hygienically cleaned, disinfected and chlorinated appropriately	
15	Educators will complete daily safety checklists to check for and empty any water that has collected after rainfall	
16	When using water troughs or containers for water play educators will ensure they are filled to a safe level and emptied into the garden after use, water troughs are to be used with a stand and children are to remain standing on the ground whilst using the water trough.	
17	Children will be discouraged to drink water from water play activities	
18	Educators will ensure laundry, storerooms and educator areas have staff only signs on doors and doors are closed/locked at all times	
19	Hot water that is accessible to children will be maintained at or below the temperature of 45.C°	
20	Educators will follow emergency procedures and first aid procedures in the event of an incident or injury involving a water hazard	
21	Parents will be notified within 24 hrs if their child is involved in an incident/accident at the service or while under the care of the service	
22	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	

REVIEW OF PROCEDURE			
Date procedure created	MARCH 2023	To be reviewed	MARCH 2024
Reviewed by	Kirstee Neville	Date Reviewed	MARCH 2024
Procedure Reviewed Date	Modifications/Changes		
MARCH 2024	No modifications or changes		
MARCH 2023	New Procedure Developed		