

# Health & Safety Policy

---

Early Childhood Services can be high-risk environments for incidents and accidents to children, families, Educators, staff, students, volunteers and visitors. Our Service is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment through comprehensive policies and procedures, managing risks and hazards appropriately and effectively.

## National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety		
2.1	<b>Health</b>	Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	<b>Wellbeing and comfort</b>	Each child’s wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s needs for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.1.2	<b>Health practices and procedures</b>	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.1.3	<b>Healthy Lifestyles</b>	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
2.2	<b>Safety</b>	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	<b>Supervision</b>	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	<b>Incident and emergency management</b>	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.
2.2.3	<b>Child Protection</b>	Management, Educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

## Education and Care Services National Regulations

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law	
182	Tobacco, drug and alcohol free environment
156	Relationships in groups
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
104	Fencing and security
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
107	Space requirements—indoor
108	Space requirements—outdoor space

109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
110	Ventilation and natural light
111	Administrative space
112	Nappy change facilities
113	Outdoor space—natural environment
114	Outdoor space—shade
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
116	Assessments of family day care residences and approved family day care venues
117	Glass (additional requirement for family day care)
73	Educational programs
74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program
75	Information about the educational program to be kept available
76	Information about educational program to be given to parents
80	Weekly menu
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
102	Authorisation for excursions
111	Administrative space (centre-based services)
158	Children’s attendance records to be kept by approved provider
168	Policies and procedures are required in relation to enrolment and orientation
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

#### **RELATED POLICIES**

Physical Environment Policy

Supervision Policy

Arrival & Departure Policy

Incident, Illness, Accident & Trauma Policy

Clothing Policy

Hand Washing Policy

Sick Children Policy

Child Protection Policy

Sun Safety Policy (NSW) and Sun Safety Policy (VIC)

Water Safety Policy

Safe Storage of Hazardous Substances Policy

Orientation of Families Policy

Governance Policy

## **PURPOSE**

We aim to protect the health, safety and welfare of children, families, Educators, staff, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service by complying with current health and safety laws and legislation.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to children, families, Educators, staff, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

New work health and safety (WHS) laws have commenced in the following States and Territories, using harmonised WHS legislation instead of previous OH&S laws:

- Commonwealth
- Australian Capital Territory
- New South Wales
- Northern Territory
- Queensland
- Tasmania
- South Australia

Victoria and Western Australia are yet to develop new legislation.

The National Quality Framework establishes the standards and learning frameworks to provide high quality inclusive education and care in early and middle childhood settings, which can only occur in a safe and healthy work environment. The NQF makes few unambiguous references to work health and safety as it is part of different legislation that sits alongside and compliments this framework.

### **Good work health and safety policies, procedures and practices ensure that:**

- Management fulfils its responsibility to provide a safe work place, without any negative impact on the health and wellbeing of employees.
- Employees meet their health and safety obligations and are safe in the workplace.
- Children, families and all service visitors come to a safe workplace that protects their health and wellbeing.
- The work environment supports quality early education and care.

We are dedicated to ensuring that all health and safety needs are met through the implementation of operative hygiene practices to control the spread of infectious diseases, the prevention and management of injuries and illness and providing a safe and secure physical environment for children. In any occurrences where children show any signs of illness, accident, injury or trauma, Educators will refer to the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy.

The importance of children's nutritional and physical health needs will be promoted by educating children about a healthy lifestyle which will be reinforced through the everyday routine and experiences. Information on health, hygiene, safe food and dental care principles and practices will be displayed at the Service to provide families with more information.

We believe in quality education and care in an environment that provides for their protection through adequate supervision, safe experiences and environments, and emergency vigilance. Educators at the Service are dedicated to understanding their legal and ethical responsibility to protect the children enrolled at the Service.

#### **Arrangements for Laundering of Soiled Items**

- Soiled clothing will be returned to a child's home for laundering. Educators will remove soiled content and placed into a plastic bag. Items will be stored securely in a sealed container and not placed into the child's bag. For more information refer to the Nappy Change and Toileting Policy.

#### **Choosing Appropriate Resources and Equipment**

- The Approved Provider will be ultimately responsible for any purchases of equipment.
- Educators will document any equipment which needs maintenance on a prioritised basis in the Maintenance & Hazard Register.
- Resources and equipment will be chosen to reflect the cultural diversity of the Service community and the cultural diversity of contemporary Australia.
- The Service will actively pursue the contribution of families regarding toys and equipment at the Service.
- All new equipment will be checked against Australian Safety Standards.
- Children will be carefully introduced to new toys & pieces of equipment and taught how to use and care for them appropriately.
- Equipment that should only be used under supervision will be stored in a safe place out of children's reach.
- The use of pools and toys or equipment which involves the use of water will be used under the direct supervision of Educators. All equipment will be emptied of water when not in use, and stored in such a manner that it cannot collect water.
- Equipment will be checked regularly by the Educators to ensure it is in a clean and safe condition which will be recorded on the appropriate indoor and outdoor safety checklist.
- The Approved Provider will advise the Educator and parents about the purchase of new equipment and ensure a risk assessment has been conducted.

#### **The children's learning environment**

- The Service will keep a record of any changes that are made to the physical environment of the Service, such as rearranging of rooms etc to show continuous improvement.
- The Service will document the links between the arrangements and choice of resources and equipment and the children's learning in the program.

### **On-going Maintenance**

- The Service will reflect on the environment and establish a plan certifying that the environment continuously collaborates with our philosophy of providing a safe and secure environment, stimulating and engaging for all who interact with it.
- The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will also ensure that the Service and its grounds comply with Local Government and regulations regarding fire ventilation, natural and artificial lighting and safety glass.
- Should the Service undertake major renovations, management plans will be put into place to ensure the safety of Educators, children, families and others at the Service.

### **Children's Groupings**

- Our Service groups the children throughout the day according to their age and/or developmental stage. Within each room children are able to explore and experience their own temperaments in both the indoor and outdoor environment. For example, providing children the opportunity to explore quiet play spaces, such as our book corner and a loud/physical play space such as the block area.
- In order for children to interact with the children and Educators from other rooms in the Service, in both the morning and late afternoon, we have family grouping, where all children attending the Service are together.

### **Safety Checks**

A daily inspection of the premises will be undertaken before children begin to arrive. This inspection will include the:

- Service Perimeters
- Fences/Fence Line
- Gates
- Paths
- Buildings
- All rooms accessible by children
- Fixed equipment
- Sand Pit

This must to be done in order to identify any dangerous objects in the grounds ranging from sharps to poisonous or dangerous plants and animals. To ensure best practice, the daily safety checks will be conducted prior to the children arriving at the Service.

In the event of a sharp object being found (for example a syringe) Educators will wear gloves and use tongs to pick up the object and dispose of it into the yellow "Biohazard" container as per the recommendations of local council.

Similarly, trees in the grounds must be checked regularly for overhanging, dead or dangerous looking branches as well as check for any infestations or nests.

The Service will have regular pest inspections carried out by an accredited pest control company. Documentation of these inspections will be kept and any findings from the pest control check will be carried out in line with the recommendation of the pest control company.

The daily Safety Opening and Closing Checklists will be used as the procedure to conduct these safety checks. A record of these will be kept by the Service. Any required maintenance will immediately be reported by the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor who will make the appropriate arrangements to have repairs carried out.

**The following are used as a guidelines to produce the Checklists for the Service:**

**Checklist: Outdoor**

- **Building maintenance** - regularly maintain and check for hazards, check building is in a safe, clean and hygienic condition. Records of any damages and subsequent repairs are kept.
- **Doors** - have finger jam protectors.
- **Dust mites, pet allergens** - regular dusting and vacuuming.
- **Fences** - securely and effectively fence all sides of outdoor play areas from roads, water hazards, and driveways. Maintain fences have correct height. Install childproof self-locking devices on gates.
- **Garbage** - safe and prompt disposal. Use lidded secure bins that prevent child access and maintain in a clean and safe condition. Encourage recycling.
- **Garden** and renovation debris removed. Regularly trim branches and bushes.
- **Garages and sheds** - keep locked.
- **Heating, cooling, ventilation, lighting** - comfortable, safe, maintained, guarded and are kept out of reach of children.
- **Hygienic**, regularly cleaned and maintained conditions protect against vermin, bacteria, mildew, lead, asbestos and other dust allergens.
- **Non-slip** floors, stairs, steps, grounds and nonporous indoor floors for easy cleaning.
- **Renovation** dangers e.g. lead, asbestos, holes and excavations - reduce risks.
- **Pesticide** residue - dangerous chemicals should not be used to remove vermin.
- **Safety glass** is installed according to the Australian Standards on all glass doors and windows accessible to children, and safety decals on both sliding doors and plate glass doors at child and adult eye level.
- **Security** - minimising unauthorised access with appropriate fencing and locks.
- **Spills** - clean away as they occur.
- **Under Service access** (including buildings on stilts and footings) - lock or block access.
- **Window fly screens** securely fitted, maintained and permanent.
- **Hazards and driveways**. Maintain fences, have correct height, install childproof self- locking devices on gates.

- **Bikes and wheeled toys** - it is recommended that correctly fitted helmets be worn every time children use 'bikes' and wheeled toys. For further information contact the Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program on (02) 9850 9882.
- **Centre car park** - ensure family members are aware of pedestrian safety rules such as holding their child's hand and alighting children from the safety door. Encourage families to always supervise their children in the car park to prevent accidents and injuries, which could occur as a result of reversing vehicles.
- **Finger entrapment** - all holes or openings in playground equipment must be between 8-25 mm.
- **First aid kit is approved**, maintained, and accessible throughout outdoor play.
- **Hazardous Plants** - identify and remove or make inaccessible to children.
- **Machinery, tools and equipment** - ensure all engine operated or other hazardous equipment, tools or machinery are stored securely and are inaccessible to children.
- **Pet and animal droppings** cleared or inaccessible to children in outdoor areas, exclude dogs from children's play areas, finger proof pet enclosures, supervise pet interactions with children.
- **Pool safety, fencing and gate compliance**, paddling pools emptied immediately after use, turn upside down, disinfected if soiled.
- **Safe play rules and adequate safe play areas** - talk with children about how to play safely. Maintain safe layouts for outdoor play areas to avoid collisions between children.
- **Sandpits** - cover when not in use, regularly clean, rake, and remove sand soiled by faeces or blood. Hose sandpits at end of day after removing contaminated sand and material.
- **Soft fall** - appropriate ground cover under outdoor climbing and play equipment, meets standards.
- **Sun protection** clothing, hats, and sunscreen, for unshaded areas - minimise play at peak sun exposure times. Install a sunshade over sandpits and play areas.
- **Ensure children are visible and supervised at all times.** High-risk areas and climbing and other outdoor play equipment. Make hazardous equipment, machinery, chemicals, and any other materials inaccessible to children.
- **Water hazards** - cover and make inaccessible to children, e.g. ponds, dams, spas, creeks, nappy buckets.
- **Water troughs** are to be used under adult supervision only and will not be used without a stand, keeping it off the ground. Children are to remain standing on the ground whilst using the water trough.
- **Play equipment** that is higher than 50cm has soft fall installed underneath at least 25cm in depth under and 1.9m from the perimeter of the equipment. Place outdoor play equipment away from paths and solid garden edging.
- **Surfacing** used underneath and around equipment complies with Australian and New Zealand Standards AS/NZS 4422, 1996, and is maintained regularly; materials may need to be raked, redistributed and checked weekly for spiders, sharp objects or animal litter.
- **Wild animals/snakes** - grounds will be searched during the safety check.

### Checklist: Indoor

- **Access for children and adults with disability** - ensure safe access into, within and out of the Service, security, toilet and washing facilities, and check for hazards for wheelchairs and people with impaired sight, hearing or mobility.
- **Barriers** - age appropriate, child proof, self-locking barriers to balconies, stairways, kitchen, bathroom, laundry, garage, other levels in the Service, front and back garden.
- **Children at risk** - maintain extra security and supervision for children at special risk.
- **Choking hazards** - e.g. small toy parts, beads, nuts, blind and curtain cords, plastic bags, sandwich bags and balloons.
- **Decorations and children's artwork** - do not place near ceiling fans, air conditioners or heaters. Avoid use of tacks, pins, and staples.
- **Emergency evacuation** - develop an evacuation plan and emergency contact numbers display, inform families, and practice evacuation procedures.
- **Fire** - fire blanket, extinguisher, fire exits, smoke detectors, electrical safety switch.
- **First aid kit** with approved contents is maintained and accessible. Ensure First Aid certificates are current for relevant Educators.
- **Furniture and nursery equipment** - stable, maintained and meets safety standards.
- **Guard and make inaccessible to Children** - heaters, coolers, fireplaces, stoves, microwaves, power points, and office equipment. Ensure heaters are away from children's cots.
- **Hazardous indoor and outdoor plants** - identify, remove or make inaccessible to children.
- **Heaters** - ensure that children cannot come in contact with hot surfaces. It is preferable to use heating where combustion products are ducted outside. If gas heating is used ensure there is adequate ventilation while the heater is operating.
- **Hot water** - ensure the hot water supply is regulated so as to keep it below the temperature at which a child can be scalded (the current KidSafe recommendation is below 43.5°C).
- **Machinery, tools and equipment** - ensure all engine operated or other hazardous equipment, tool or machinery are stored securely and are inaccessible to children.
- **Noise** - reduce excessive exposure.
- **Non-slip, non-porous** floors, stairs.
- **Pets and animals** - inform families of pets being kept on premises and plans to obtain new pets. Ensure pets are vaccinated, wormed, don't have fleas, clean, and healthy. Keep pet accessories such as pet food, litter boxes, pet toys away from children. Exclude dogs from children's play areas. Keep children-pet interactions minimal and supervise interaction times.
- **Record details** and notify parents of any child accident.
- **Safe play rules and adequate play spaces:** discourage running indoors and safe furniture layout to avoid collisions.
- **Safety glass used and installed** according to Australian Standards, and Australian Building Codes on all glass doors and windows accessible to children, **safety decals** on sliding doors and plate glass doors at child and adult eye level.

- **Security** - ensure all entry doors are locked at all times and place bells on doors.
- **Smoke & drug free environment** in all areas.
- **Educators personal items** - ensure Educator's personal items such as bags, sharp instruments, toiletries and medicines are kept secure and are inaccessible to children.
- **Stairways**, ramps, corridors, hallway, external balcony must be enclosed to prevent a child falling.
- **Store in locked cabinet** any unsafe items, e.g. chemicals, medicines, razors, knives and electrical equipment.
- **Supervision and visibility of children** - ensure children are visible and supervised at all times. High risk areas are children in high chairs, playpens and play areas, on change tables, and in nappy change and toilet areas. Have at least two Educators on premises at all times with vision of each other and the children, have two Educators present or in view when changing nappies or washing children.
- **Toys** - meet safety standards, age appropriate, maintained, and non-toxic.

### **Cleaning of Buildings, Premises, Furniture and Equipment**

#### **General Cleaning**

- The Service will use structured cleaning schedules to ensure that all cleaning is carried out regularly and thoroughly.
- Educators will clean the service at the end of each day and throughout the day as needed, signing off on all cleaning duties that have been completed.
- Accidents and spills will be cleaned up as quickly as possible to ensure that the Service always maintains a high level of cleanliness and hygiene.

#### **When purchasing, storing and/or using any dangerous chemicals, substances, medicines or equipment, our Service will:**

- Adhere at all times to manufacturer's advice and instructions when using products to clean furniture and equipment at the Service.
- Store all dangerous chemicals, substances and medicines in their original containers provided by the manufacturer. All labels and/or use by dates should be kept intact at all times.
- Ensure that any substance found to be stored in a different container than originally provided, or with destroyed labels and/or unknown use by dates will not be used under any circumstances.
- Ensure that containers are disposed of correctly following local council guidelines, and not reused under any circumstances.
- Ensure that all dangerous chemicals, substances and equipment are stored in a locked place or facility which is labelled, secure and inaccessible to children. These materials may include, but are not limited to, all cleaning materials, detergents, poisonous or dangerous substances, dangerous tools and equipment including those with sharp and razor edges and toiletries.

- Follow the instructions of manufacturers, particularly of any product which may need to be stored in a refrigerated environment pursuant to the directives.
- Ensure that refrigerated substances are stored in a labelled, child resistant container, preferably in a separate compartment or in a part of the refrigerator inaccessible to children.
- Ensure all hazardous chemicals used or stored at the Service have a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) formerly called a Material Data Safety Sheet. Our Service will adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for use, storage, and first aid instructions recorded on the SDS.
- Maintain a Safety Data Sheet Register of all hazardous chemicals, substances and equipment used at the Service. Information recorded should include where they are stored, their use, any risks, and first aid instructions and the current SDS. The register will be readily accessible.
- Ensure that appropriate personal protective clothing is worn in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions when using and disposing of hazardous substances or equipment.
- Seek medical advice immediately if poisoning or potentially hazardous ingestion, inhaled, skin or eye exposure has occurred, or call the **Poisons Information Line** on **13 11 26**, or call an **Ambulance** on **000**.
- Ensure that, in the case of any child, Educator or other person becoming injured by a chemical, substance or equipment, the Service will initiate our emergency, medical and first aid procedures, notifying the appropriate authority that administers workplace health and safety immediately and any other person or authority as required by regulations or guidelines.
- In any major emergency involving a hazardous chemical or equipment, a hazardous gas or a fire or explosion hazard, call the emergency services, dial 000 and notify the appropriate authority that administers workplace health and safety and any other person or authority as required by regulations or guidelines.
- The Poison Safety Checklist will be used in order to ensure we are consistently meeting requirements.

### Hand washing

In order to assist in preventing the transmission of germs is effective handwashing. Adults and children should wash their hands:

- When hands are visibly dirty
- When coming inside from being outside
- On arrival
- Before you eat
- Before you prepare food items
- After touching raw meats like chicken or beef
- After contact with any body fluids like blood, urine or vomit
- After changing infant or adult nappies
- After touching animals or pets

- After blowing your nose or sneezing
- After meals
- After going to the toilet

### **Minimising Potentially Dangerous Substances**

Our Service also implements the concept of minimising the use of potentially dangerous substances. Ordinary detergents will be used to help remove dirt from surfaces. Colour-coded sponges (e.g. pink for the kitchen, yellow for the bathroom) will be used in order to not cross-contaminate areas. Different rubber gloves will also be used in each room then hung out to dry and air. Before returning to the children, Educators will wash and dry hands.

### **Disinfectants**

Disinfectants are usually unnecessary as very few germs can survive exposure to fresh air and natural light. In an outbreak situation, public health units may specify the use of a particular disinfectant. In this situation, for the disinfectant to work effectively, there still needs to be thorough cleaning using a detergent beforehand. Essentially, there is no ideal disinfectant.

Disinfectants cannot kill germs if the surface is not clean. It is more important to ensure: Surfaces have been cleaned with detergent and warm water than to use a disinfectant.

To kill germs, any disinfectant needs:

- A clean surface to be able to get to the germ.
- To be able to act against those particular germs.
- To be of the right concentrate.
- Enough time to kill the germs, this is at least 10 minutes.

### **Detergents**

To work in accordance with Staying healthy in Child Care, proper cleaning with detergent and warm water, followed by rinsing then drying and airing time kills most germs from surfaces as they are unable to multiply in a clean environment. Cleaning equipment should be stored and taken care of so it can dry between uses and not multiply germs itself.

### **Nappy change area**

Nappy change areas need to be cleaned after each use with disinfectant. Refer to Nappy Change & Toileting Policy.

### **Clothing**

- Educators clothing should be washed daily.
- Educators should also have a change of clothes available in case of accidents.
- Dress-up and play clothes out on display should be washed once a week.

## **Toy Cleaning**

Educators are required to clean the children's equipment and toys on a regular basis in order to minimise cross contamination and the spread of illnesses. Educators will wash a toy immediately if it has been sneezed on, mouthed, and soiled or if it has been discarded after play by a child who has been unwell. The Service will have washable toys for the younger children.

Refer to the following toy cleaning schedule for toys on display in the children's rooms. Educators will be required to complete a Cleaning and Disinfectant Record documenting when toys and equipment have been cleaned.

### **Recommended cleaning materials:**

- Most toys can be washed with normal dishwashing liquid, rinsing with clean water.
- Get into corners with a toothbrush and allow to air dry (if possible in the natural sunlight).
- Leaving items such as LEGO and construction blocks to drain on a clean tea-towel overnight is idyllic.

### **Wooden Toys:**

- Should be wiped over with a damp cloth – please do not immerse in water as this can destroy the equipment.

### **Play Dough**

The Service will reduce the risk of the spread of disease when playing with play dough by:

- Encouraging hand washing before and after using play dough.
- Storing the play dough in a sealed container in the refrigerator between uses.
- Making a new batch of play dough each week.
- If there is an outbreak of vomiting and/or diarrhoea, discarding the playdough at the end of each day during the outbreak.

### **Rattles and Baby Toys:**

- Must not be immersed in water as it can get inside, rendering the toy useless.
- Wipe thoroughly with hot water or a cloth with diluted vinegar.

### **Ride-on Vehicles and Outdoor Toys:**

- Must be cleaned.
- Please take care not leave them exposed to the elements as this reduces their lifespan.

### **Puzzles and Games:**

- Wooden puzzles as per 'Wooden Toys' above.
- Cardboard should be wiped over with a slightly damp cloth.

## **Sun Protection**

Our Service will work in collaboration with the SunSmart Program NSW and VIC to ensure children's health and safety is maintained at all times whilst at the Service. SunSmart recommends that all early childhood education and care services have a Sunsmart Policy to reduce UV damage to those in care, including Educators. Our Sun Safety Policy NSW and VIC have been accepted and approved by Sunsmart. Please refer to our Sun Safety Policy NSW and VIC for further information.

## **Delivery and Collection of Children**

The following procedure must be adhered to at all times to ensure the safety of the children.

### **Arrival:**

- All children must be signed in by their parent or person who delivers the child to our Service. If the parent or other person forgets to sign the child in they will be signed in by the Nominated Supervisor or an Educator.
- An Educator is to check the sign in record ensuring families have signed their child in. If families have not signed the child in, Educator is to comply with Regulation 158.
- An Educator will greet and receive each child to ensure the child is cared for at all times.
- A hook will be made available to all children to hang their bag.

### **Departure:**

- All children must be signed out by their parent or person who collects the child from our Service. If the parent or other person forgets to sign the child out they will be signed out by the Nominated Supervisor or an Educator.
- Children can only be collected by a parent, an authorised nominee named on their enrolment record, or a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee to collect the child. Children may leave the premises if a parent or authorised nominee provides written authorisation for the child to leave the premises.
- Children will not be released into the care of a person not authorised to collect the child e.g. court orders concerning custody and access. If an unauthorised person is not willing to leave the premises without the child the Educator will call the police.
- Nominated Supervisors will ensure that the authorised nominee pick-up list for each child is kept up to date.
- No child will be released into the care of anyone not known to Educators. Parents must give prior notice where:
  - The person collecting the child is someone other than those mentioned on the enrolment form (E.g. in an emergency).
  - There is a variation in the persons picking up the child, including where the child is collected by an authorised nominee who is unknown to Educators.
- If Educators do not know the person by appearance, the person must be able to produce some photo identification. If Educators cannot verify the person's identity they may be unable to release the child into that person's care.

- If the person collecting the child appears to be intoxicated, or under the influence of drugs, and Educators feel that the person is unfit to take responsibility for the child, Educators will:
  - Discuss their concerns with the person, if possible without the child being present.
  - Suggest they contact another parent or authorised nominee to collect the child.
  - Educators will inform the police of the circumstances, the person’s name and vehicle registration number if the person insists on taking the child. Educators cannot prevent an incapacitated parent from collecting a child, but must consider their obligations under the relevant child protection laws.
- At the end of each day Educators will check all beds and the premises including outdoors and indoors to ensure that no child remains on the premises after the Service closes.
- Children may leave the premises in the event of an emergency, including medical emergencies.
- Details of absences during the day will be recorded.

To ensure we meet Work Health and Safety requirements and ensure the safety of our children, individuals visiting our Service must sign in when they arrive at the Service, and sign out when they leave. Refer to our Arrival & Departure Policy for more detailed information.

**Water Safety**

Please refer to our Water Safety Policy for further information.

**Kitchen Safety**

- Children must not gain access to any harmful substance, equipment or amenity.
- The kitchen has a barrier to prevent unsupervised entry by children into the kitchen.
- The preparation of bottles for children under the age of 2 years is both safe and hygienic at all times and separate from nappy change area.
- Children will not be allowed in the kitchen area unless accompanied by an Educator or staff member.

**Hazard Identification**

A hazard is a source of potential harm or a situation that could cause, or lead to harm to people or property. Workplace hazards can be physical, chemical, biological, mechanical or psychological.

Potential Hazard	What does this include?	Example	Potential accident
Physical	Floors, stairs, steps, ladders, fire, falling objects, slippery surfaces, manual handling (lifting, pulling, pushing), noise, heat and cold, radiation, poor lighting, ventilation	Children’s beds placed in an open area, wet bathroom floors, lifting children for nappy changes.	Trips, slips and falls, Manual handling injury (soft tissue/back injury)

<b>Mechanical and/or Electrical</b>	Electricity, machinery, equipment, washers and dryers, kitchen appliances, motor vehicles.	Lint accumulation in dryers can be a combustion hazard. Frayed power cords or unplugged power points are an electrical hazard.	Fire, electric shock, electrocution
<b>Chemical</b>	Includes substances such as acids or poisons, cleaning agents, dusts and fumes.	Cleaning chemicals, Medication	Fire, explosion, poisoning
<b>Biological</b>	Includes bacteria, viruses, mould, mildew, insects, vermin and animals.	Sick staff or children attending the service, Contaminated food, mice infestation.	Cross-infection, food poisoning.
<b>Psychological</b>	Workplace stressors.	Bullying, children's needs exceed skill or confidence of educators, insufficient management support.	High stress levels (staff and children), compromised care practices, failure to be inclusive.

Reference: Work Health and Safety in Education and Care Services PSC National Alliance

### **Controlling or Managing Hazards**

Controlling or managing hazards refers to controlling the risk in the workplace. Work health and safety legislation identifies a Hierarchy of Control that range from hazard elimination to hazard management. Management and Educators are required to use a risk assessment form/process to assess the risk and danger of a potential hazard.

### **Monitor and Review Hazards**

Risk management is an ongoing process. Risks must be systematically monitored and management strategies reviewed to ensure that they continue to be effective and contribute to a safe and healthy work environment. New hazards can emerge over time resulting in control strategies becoming ineffective and therefore may require updating.

### **Electrical equipment testing**

Services must ensure that electrical equipment is tested by a qualified person on a regular basis which is recorded with a tag attached to the equipment tested. This must be kept until the equipment is next tested or disposed of and must specify:

- The name of the tester
- The date and outcome of the testing
- The date on which the next testing must be carried out

## **Maintenance of Fire Equipment**

All fire equipment at our Service will be maintained as per the legal standards. Our equipment will be checked as required as per the timeframes below. External agencies will be employed to conduct the maintenance of the fire equipment if no currently employed staff or Educators are qualified to complete the maintenance checks.

## **Back Care and Manual Handling**

- Manual handling is any activity requiring the use of strength used by the person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person or object.
- Manual handling injuries may be caused by the activities listed above. Injuries can include back strains, similar strains and sprains in parts of the body such as the neck, arm, shoulder and knee.
- Manual handling injuries also include overuse injuries or, as a result of falling during manual handling, bruising or laceration.

## **Commendations:**

- Due to the physical demands of child care, it is sensible to do warm-up exercises for three to five minutes before starting work. Predominantly through the winter period as muscles and tendons are more likely to be damaged when cold. Simple exercises to warm and stretch all the major muscle groups will help prevent injury.
- To help prevent injuries, there are legal requirements for manual handling in the workplace.

## **The employer, in consultation with Educators and staff will:**

- Provide you annually with training in Manual Handling and Back Care.
- Display in the staff room written information regarding manual handling and any updates as required.
- Make sure that equipment and containers are designed and maintained to be, as far as workable, safe and without risk to health and safety when manually handled.
- Make sure that the work practices involving manual handling and the work environment are designed to be, as far as workable, consistent with safe manual handling activities.
- Identify, assess and control all risks associated with manual handling in each workplace.
- Clearly mark any equipment which requires more than one person to lift or move it.

## **Ideologies of Preventing Manual Handling Injuries**

1. Eliminate or reduce the amount of manual handling.
2. Reduce the amount of bending, forward reaching, and twisting, in all tasks.
3. Reduce worker fatigue.
4. Keep all equipment in good working order.
5. Keep the workplace environment safe.

## **To help prevent manual handling injuries:**

- Kneel down rather than bend down.
- Sit down with the children rather than bend over

- Sit in an appropriate sized chair or on the floor.
- Carry children only when necessary.
  - The correct way to carry a child is with one arm under the child's buttocks and the other arm supporting the child's back. At the same time, hold the child facing you, as close to your body as possible.
  - Adults should try to avoid carrying a child on their hip because this can strain the back.
- When lifting awkward loads, be careful to lift with a balanced and comfortable posture.
- Minimise the need to reach above shoulder level.
  - If necessary use a step ladder.
- Avoid extended reaching forward,
  - For example, leaning into low equipment boxes.
- Share the load if the equipment is heavy, long or awkward.
- To lift a child out of a cot, it is vital to put the side down of the cot first, lean against the cot and raise the child as close as possible to your body. Do not stretch over and lift.
- When sliding, pulling or pushing equipment that is not easy to move, e.g. trestles or gym mats, ask for help and organise a team lift.
- Where possible, rearrange surroundings to meet the needs of both children and adults. Remember these needs when buying furniture and equipment or upgrading facilities.
- Use equipment and furniture that can be moved around as safely and easily as possible.
- To complete lengthy writing tasks, e.g. program planning, sit at an appropriate adult sized chair at an adult sized table.
- Larger children to climb up steps/ladder provided to change table.

### **Avoid Twisting when Lifting**

Many injuries result from twisting while lifting. To avoid this:

- Move equipment when children are not around.
- Rearrange storage so that it is easier and safer to replace and remove items.
- Lift only within the limits of your strength.
- Use beds and equipment that are easy to move.
- Make sure you can see where you are going when carrying equipment or children.
- Be especially careful when lifting a child with special needs.

### **Avoid Accidents with Careful Housekeeping**

Good housekeeping means fewer accidents. Check that:

- The floors and other walking surfaces are uncluttered, even and non-slippery.
- The workplace is tidy.
- There is adequate space to perform each task.
- Equipment is maintained regularly.
- Lighting is adequate.

### How to Lift Safely

1. Place your feet in a stride position.
2. Keep your breastbone as elevated as possible.
3. Bend your knees.
4. Brace your stomach muscles.
5. Hold the object close to your centre of gravity, i.e. around your navel.
6. Move your feet not your spine.
7. Prepare to move in a forward-facing direction
8. Ask for help when it is not possible to lift on your own.

### How to Organise a Team Lift

1. Ask a colleague who is willing and able to help.  
Ideally the colleague should be fairly well matched with you in size and strength.
2. Agree on a plan of action.  
A coordinated movement during a lift is important.
3. Timing is important for co-ordination.  
One person should act as a team leader and 'call' the lift.

### How to Assess the Correct Storage and Shelving Height

Correct storage and shelving height is important to prevent slips, falls and strains:

- The best height range for handling loads is around waist level.
- The acceptable height for lifting is any point between the individual's knuckle and shoulder.
- **Seldom-used objects** can be stored at the shoulder-to-raised arm height (use ladders to avoid stretching).
- **Avoid storing objects** at a level between an individual's knuckles and the floor.
- **Mechanical aids such as ladders and trolleys should be used where possible** to avoid lifting.

The WorkCover Authority of NSW administers the Work Health and Safety legislation in NSW, and has several codes of practice on specific work safety issues which are available online at <http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/lawpolicy/codesofPractice/Pages/default.aspx>

Work Safe Victoria administers the Work Health and Safety legislation in Victoria. Further information is available online at <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/>

### Sources

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority.
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- ECA Code of Ethics.
- Staying Health in Child Care 5<sup>th</sup> Edition.

- Guide to the National Quality Standard.
- Australian Standards 1851-2005 “Maintenance of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment”
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011.
- Cancer Council Sample Sun Protection Policy.
- Revised National Quality Standard.

#### Review

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
July 2017	Changes made to outline legislation requirements and meet best practice standards, including hazard identification.	July 2018
October 2017	Updated references to comply with the Revised National Quality Standard.	July 2018
July 2018	Minor changes made to further support compliance, understanding and delivery.	July 2019