



Health and Safety Policy

Early Childhood Services can be a high-risk environment for incidents and accidents to children, families, Educators 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	Health	Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	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	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.1.3	Healthy Lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child
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.
2.2.3	Child Protection	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 NSW	
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
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
102	Authorisation for excursions
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
156	Relationships in groups
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
182	Tobacco, drug and alcohol free environment

RELATED POLICIES

- Arrival and Departure Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Governance Policy
- Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy
- Orientation for Families Policy
- Physical Environment Policy
- Sick Children Policy
- Sun Safety Policy
- Water Safety Policy

PURPOSE

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

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Service.



IMPLEMENTATION

New work health and safety (WHS) laws have commenced in the following States and Territories, using consistent 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 to reflect WHS terminology.

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 references to work health and safety legislation as it underpins this framework.

Thorough 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; and
- 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 a high standard of hygiene practices to control the spread of infectious diseases, the prevention and management of injuries and illness and to provide 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 further information.

We believe in quality education and care in an environment that provides for all children's protection through adequate supervision, safe experiences and environments, and vigilance to potential risks. 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 in near the child's bag. For more information refer to the Nappy change and toileting procedure.

Choosing Appropriate Resources and Equipment

- The Approved Provider will be ultimately responsible for any purchases of equipment.
- Educators will document any equipment that needs maintenance on a prioritised basis in the maintenance register.
- Resources and equipment will be chosen to reflect the cultural diversity of the Service's 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 and 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 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 children's learning environment

- The Room Leader will keep a record in their diary of any changes that are made to the physical environment, such as rearranging of rooms etc to show continuous improvement.
- The Room Leader 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 ensuring that the environment continuously complies with our philosophy of providing a safe and secure environment that is 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 regulations, and regulations regarding fire protection, natural and artificial lighting and safety glass.
- Should the Service undertake major renovations, management plans will be put in place to ensure that the safety of educators, children, families and others at the Service is not compromised.



The 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 develop new skills and knowledge 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.
- For children to interact with the children and educators from other rooms in the Service, in the morning we have family grouping, where all children attending the Service are together.

Safety Checks

A daily inspection of the premises will be undertaken which 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 accessing areas in 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 place it in the 'sharp object box'. This box will be disposed of as per the recommendations of our local council.

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

Non-fixed play equipment in the Service grounds can be no more than one metre high and must be supervised at all times by an educator.

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 Indoor and Outdoor Daily Safety 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 to the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor who will make the appropriate arrangements to have repairs carried out.

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.
- Accidents and spills will be cleaned up as quickly as possible to ensure that the Service always maintains a high level of cleanliness, hygiene, and safety.

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 containers are disposed of correctly following local council guidelines, and not reused under any circumstances.
- Ensure all dangerous chemicals, substances and equipment is 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.
- Refrigerate substances that must be 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 are supplied with 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.
- 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 emergency, medical and first aid procedures are carried out, with relevant notification given to the appropriate authority that administers workplace health and safety 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 also 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

Effective handwashing is the best way to prevent the transmission of germs. Adults and children should wash their hands:

- When hands are visibly dirty
- When coming inside from being outside
- On arrival
- Before eating
- Before preparing food items
- After touching raw meats such as chicken or beef
- After contact with any body fluids such as blood, urine or vomit
- After changing nappies
- After touching animals or pets
- After blowing your nose or sneezing and after assisting a child to blow their nose.
- After meals
- After going to the toilet

Minimising Potentially Dangerous Substances

Our Service minimises 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 eliminate cross contamination. Before returning to the children educators will wash and dry hands.

Detergents

To work in accordance with Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services, proper cleaning with detergent and warm water, followed by rinsing and air-drying 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 allow germs to multiply.

Nappy change area

Nappy change areas must be cleaned after each use with disinfectant. Refer to Nappy Changing Policy and procedure



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/or 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 by the bath in the nappy change room.. Educators will be required to keep a toy cleaning register documenting when toys and equipment have been cleaned.

Recommended cleaning materials:

- Most toys can be washed with normal dishwashing liquid, and rinsed 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 ideal.

Wooden Toys:

- Should be wiped over with a damp cloth and Glen 20 – please do not immerse in water as this can destroy the equipment

Play Dough

Our 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, and
- 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 (children can often help with this activity).
- Please take care not leave outdoor toys 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 compliance with the NSW Sunsmart Program 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 has been accepted and approved by Sunsmart.



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.
- An educator is to check the sign in sheet regularly to ensure all children are signed in. If families have not signed the child in, the educator will sign the child in, complying with Regulation 158.
- An educator will greet and receive each child to ensure the child is cared for at all times.
- A locker, hook or shelf space will be made available to children and their families.

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) or
 - 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.

Visitors

To ensure we can 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 and Departure policy and procedure for more detailed information.

Water Safety

- At all times children near water are closely supervised. A child will never be left unattended near any water.
- Immediately empty all wading pools/water troughs etc. after every use, storage should prevent the collection of water e.g. upright/inverted, also check grounds after rain or watering and empty water that has collected in holes or containers.
- Ensure wading/water trough are hygienically cleaned and disinfected appropriately:
 - On a daily basis remove leaves and debris, hose away surface dirt and scrub inside with disinfectant.
 - Wash away disinfectant before filling trough.

Kitchens

- 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 should not be permitted in the kitchen at any time

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)
Mechanical and/or Electrical	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
Chemical	Includes substances such as acids or poisons, cleaning agents, dusts and fumes.	Cleaning chemicals, Medication	Fire, explosion, poisoning
Biological	Includes bacteria, viruses, mould, mildew, insects, vermin and animals.	Sick staff or children attending the Service, Contaminated food, mice infestation.	Cross-infection, food poisoning.
Psychological	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 ranges 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

Records will be maintained including details of when electrical equipment is due to be re-tested (the recommendations are for all equipment to be tested annually).

Maintenance of Fire Equipment

All fire equipment at our Service will be maintained as per the legal standards. Our equipment will be checked 6 monthly. External agencies will be employed to conduct the maintenance of the fire equipment.

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.

Recommendations:

- Due to the physical demands of working with children, it is sensible to do warm up exercises for three to five minutes before starting work particularly 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 coordinator, in consultation with staff/educators will:

- Provide you annually with training in Manual Handling and Back Care.
- 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.

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.

Void Accidents with Careful Housekeeping

Good housekeeping means fewer accidents. Check that:

- The floors and other walking surfaces are uncluttered, even and non-slip.
- 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 to 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.

Further Resources:

SafeWork NSW administers the Work Health and Safety legislation, and has several codes of practice on specific work safety issues which are available online at <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/>

Source

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- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*



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 the references to comply with the revised National Quality Standards	July 2018
July 2018	Minor changes made to further support compliance, understanding and delivery	July 2019
July 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar and punctuation edited • Additional information added to points. • References checked. • Sources checked for currency. • New sources added. 	July 2020

Signature of Director: _____

Busy Kids Child Care