

Water Safety Policy

Quality Area 2



1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is 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.

2. Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors (including contractors) of the Service.

3. Background

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]

4. Principles

MACSEYE is committed to:

- providing opportunities for children to explore their natural environment including through water play
- ensuring that children are protected from the risks associated with drowning or non-fatal drowning experiences
- ensuring that curriculum planning incorporates water safety awareness
- providing information to educators, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and others at the service about water safety.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ensuring that children are adequately supervised at all times when near water hazards
- ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times

- conducting a risk assessment in relation to any water hazards on or near the premises that may be accessible to children
- ensuring permission is obtained from parents/guardians for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard
- ensuring that water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other offsite events
- ensuring increased levels of supervision for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard
- conducting a regular safety check of the service premises
- ensuring that an educator with a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance and immediately available at all times children are being educated and cared for by the service
- ensuring that details of current approved first aid qualifications are filed with each staff member's record
- reporting serious incidents to the regulator.
- reporting notifiable incidents to WorkSafe Victoria.

The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person is responsible for:

- assisting the Approved Provider to implement the Water Safety Policy
- ensuring parents/guardians are informed of the Water Safety Policy on enrolment
- ensuring permission is obtained from parents/guardians for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard
- ensuring information on water safety is incorporated into the educational program, when required due to a water hazard present during an activity
- ensuring that children are adequately supervised and protected from hazards and harm at all times
- ensuring that water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other offsite events
- ensuring permission is obtained from parents/guardians for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard
- ensuring increased levels of supervision for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard
- ensuring that an educator with a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance and immediately available at all times children are being educated and cared for by the service
- ensuring that all educators' current approved first aid qualifications meet the requirements of the National Regulations and are approved by ACECQA
- informing the Approved Provider immediately if any serious or notifiable incidents occur at the service.

All staff are responsible for:

- providing adequate supervision at all times
- undertaking a risk assessment prior to an excursion to a location where there is a significant water hazard
- adjusting supervision strategies to suit the activities being undertaken
- obtaining parental permission for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard
- maintaining a current approved first aid qualification
- ensuring gates and other barriers restricting access to water hazards are closed at all times and that fences are kept clear at all times
- ensuring that containers of water (including nappy buckets and cleaning buckets) are sealed with child-proof lids

- ensuring wading/paddling pools, water play containers and portable water courses are emptied immediately after each use and stored in a manner that prevents the collection of water when not in use
- checking the outdoor learning environment at the beginning and end of each day for puddles or filled containers that could pose a potential risk to small children after heavy rain
- providing water safety education as a part of the service’s program, when necessary to do so
- informing the Approved Provider immediately if any serious or notifiable incidents occur at the service.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- supervising children in their care, including siblings, while attending or assisting at the service
- ensuring that doors, gates and barriers, including playground gates, are closed after entry or exit to prevent access to water hazards
- informing themselves about water safety
- ensuring their children understand the risks associated with water
- recognising when resuscitation is required and obtaining assistance
- considering undertaking approved first aid qualifications, as resuscitation skills save lives.

6. Related documents

- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Excursion and Incursion Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Sun Safe Policy

7. Legislative requirements

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS (NQS)

Quality Area 2	Children’s health and safety
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EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW ACT

Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW REGULATIONS

Regulation 25 (1)(c)	Additional information about proposed education and care service premises
Regulation 101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
Regulation 115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
Regulation 122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
Regulation 168 (2)(a)(iii)	Education and care services must have policies and procedures on water safety, including safety during any water-based activities

Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 176	Time to notify the certain information to the Regulatory Authority

RELATED LEGISLATIONS

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)

8. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Adequate supervision	Means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently.
Approved first aid qualifications	A qualification that includes training in the matters set out below, that relates to and is appropriate to children, and has been approved by ACECQA and published on the list of ACECQA's approved first aid qualifications and training. Matters are likely to include: emergency life support and cardiopulmonary resuscitation; convulsions; poisoning; respiratory difficulties; management of severe bleeding; injury and basic wound care; and administration of an auto-immune adrenalin device.
Educational program	A program that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is based on an approved learning framework; and is delivered in a manner that accords with the approved learning framework; and is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child; and is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child (National Law).
Excursion	An outing organised by an education and care service educator but does not include an outing organised by an education and care service provided on a school site if the child or children leave the education and care service premises in the company of an educator and the child or children do not leave the school site (National Regulations).
Hazard	A source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.
MACSEYE	Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Early Years Education Ltd, a subsidiary of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd established to conduct early childhood education and care services.
National Law	Unless otherwise specified, the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. This applied law system sets a national standard for children's education and care across Australia. See

Term	Meaning
	the ACECQA website for the Application Act or legislation that applies in each jurisdiction.
National Regulations	The National Regulations support the National Law by providing detail on a range of operational requirements for an education and care service.
Nominated supervisor	<p>In relation to an education and care service, means a person who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is nominated by the approved provider of the service under Part 3 to be a nominated supervisor of that service; and • unless the individual is the approved provider, has provided written consent to that nomination (National Law).
Notifiable incident	An incident involving workplace health and safety that is required by law to be reported to WorkSafe Victoria. Notification is required for incidents that result in death or serious injury/illness, or dangerous occurrences. For a complete list of incidents that must be reported to WorkSafe Victoria, refer to the <i>Guide to Incident Notification</i> on the WorkSafe Victoria website: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au
Risk assessment	A systematic process of evaluating the potential likelihood and consequences of risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking.
Serious incident	<p>A serious incident (regulation 12) is defined as any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the death of a child while being educated and cared for at the service or following an incident while being educated and cared for by the service • any incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child while the child is being educated and cared for, which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or – the child attended or ought reasonably to have attended a hospital e.g. a broken limb* – any incident involving serious illness of a child while that child is being educated and cared for by a service for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital e.g. severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis* <p>NOTE: In some cases (for example rural and remote locations) a General Practitioner conducts consultation from the hospital site. Only treatment related to serious injury, illness or trauma is required to be notified, not other health matters.</p> • any emergency for which emergency services attended NOTE: This means an incident, situation or event where there is an imminent or severe risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a person at an education and care service. It does not mean an incident where emergency services attended as a precaution. • a child appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for at the service

Term	Meaning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a child appears to have been taken or removed from the service in a manner that contravenes the National Regulations a child was mistakenly locked in or out of the service premises or any part of the premises. <p>Notifications of serious incidents should be made to the regulatory authority (DET) through the <u>NQA IT System</u>. If this is not practicable, the notification can be made initially in whatever way is best in the circumstances.</p> <p>NOTE: some of serious incidents above are also reportable incidents under the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004</i> and require notification to WorkSafe.</p>
Water hazard	<p>Any water body that poses a potential drowning risk to children and could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> large bodies of water, such as rivers, creeks, dams, ponds, swimming pools, jetted bathtubs (or jacuzzies), in-ground spas, above ground portable spas (or hot tubs) or any container with poor drainage that allows water to pool smaller bodies of water, such as baths, nappy buckets and pet water containers.

9. Policy information

Policy information			
Policy title:	Water Safety Policy	Version:	2.0
Authorised Executive:	Director, Quality, Safety and Compliance	Responsible Manager:	General Manager WHS, Wellbeing
Approving authority:	Managing Director	Approval date:	06/09/2024
Effective date:	06/09/2024	Review date:	06/09/2025
Review approval date:	28/01/2026	Next review date	28/01/2027

Version control

Version	Date	Changes
1.0	06/09/2024	Policy developed and approved
1.1	07/01/2026	Policy reviewed to ensure it meets the current regulatory and business requirements. Policy updated to accord with current style and branding requirements
2.0	28/01/2026	Policy approved