

Emergency and Evacuation Policy and Procedure

Quality Area 2



Purpose

The service is committed to providing an environment that fosters the growth, independence and development of children while protecting their health, safety and wellbeing. This includes the implementation of policies and procedures for emergencies where evacuation of the service is necessary.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of staff, children, volunteers and visitors at the service at the time of an emergency by implementing clear procedures to follow in emergencies.

Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, volunteers and visitors at the service.

Background

Emergencies may pose a risk to an individual's health and safety. Therefore, it is important to identify potential emergencies that may be specific to their location and environment.

Principles

The Service is committed to:

- Providing a safe environment for all children, staff and other persons participating in programs at the service.
- Having a plan to manage emergencies in a way that reduces risk to those present at the service.
- Ensuring effective procedures are in place to manage emergency incidents at the service.
- Ensuring an appropriate response during and following emergency incidents to meet the needs of the children, their families, staff and others at the service.
- Informing parents/guardians as to how communication will be provided in case of an emergency.

Roles and responsibilities

The Approved Provider, the Nominated Supervisor and Educators of the Service will:

- ensure that emergency and evacuation policies and procedures are available for inspection at the service's premises at all times.
- conduct an annual risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the service and communicate the risk assessment with educators.
- consult with relevant stakeholders and authorities to improve risk mitigation strategies as part of the emergency and evacuation plan.
- consider evacuation requirements regarding non-ambulant children and the external environment for services operating in multi-storey and multiple buildings.
- ensure emergency evacuation plans are displayed at each exit to the building and include a floor plan and procedure with clearly defined assembly points and clearly marked exit routes from all locations within the service.
- ensure all exits have exit signage that is clearly visible
- ensure hallways, stairways and emergency exits are free of obstructions and hazards.
- ensure all staff, visitors and children are aware of emergency evacuation points and assembly areas
- ensure staff are adequately trained in the use of emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire blankets and hoses annually.

- undertake emergency evacuation and lockdown rehearsals once per term for each session of care covering evacuation drills and lockdowns, involving the responsible person, all staff members, volunteers and children present on the day.
- time and document each emergency evacuation rehearsal and note any areas that need improving or revising in the Emergency Evacuation Rehearsal Record
- evaluate and review emergency evacuation procedures after each rehearsal and document the drill and who was present.
- ensure children have age-appropriate support and information before, during and after emergency and evacuation rehearsals.
- ensure all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the event of an emergency
- communicate regularly with families and provide information about emergency and evacuation procedures
- communicate with the school and ensure drills are aligned where possible and required for the safety of all staff and children
- inform families when a rehearsal has occurred
- maintain an Emergency Evacuation Bag in each room, and audit and restock the bags each month.
- maintain an up to date register of emergency phone numbers for children, and ensure the list is in each Emergency Evacuation Bag
- ensure portable first aid kits are readily available in case of an emergency evacuation
- ensure at least one staff member who holds current ACEQCA approved first aid qualifications, approved anaphylaxis management training and emergency asthma management training is in attendance at all times
- ensure a copy of children's medical management plans is accessible during emergency drills and events.
- ensure the collection of children's medication occurs by a nominated person in the event of an evacuation
- maintain all fire and safety equipment in line with the requirements
- ensure that the date of any testing of emergency equipment is recorded on a label or metal tag attached to the equipment, and verification certificates for the testing are kept in file
- ensure smoke detectors are tested quarterly and batteries replaced annually
- ensure staff have access to an operational telephone or other means of communication at all times
- display emergency telephone numbers prominently throughout the service in the kitchen, staff room, and each area where children are educated and cared for, with the list of numbers to include police, local fire station and State Emergency Services
- ensure that an Emergency Evacuation Incident Report and an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness record are completed following any emergency evacuation
- notify the regulatory authority of a serious incident within 24 hours through the NQA IT system when emergency services have attended the service in response to an emergency (rather than as a precaution or for any other reason)
- support staff to provide information to parents and families following any emergency or natural disaster, including the service's opening hours, how to find alternative care and education, and how to contact services for support in dealing with trauma

Families will:

- ensure contact details are kept up to date
- provide emergency contact details on their child's enrolment form and advise the service of any change of name or phone number
- ensure the attendance record for their child is completed each day
- ensure they are aware of this policy and its procedures
- follow the directions of the approved provider/Incident Manager in the event of an emergency or evacuation

There may be times when the normal operation of the service is disrupted and the service is required to close temporarily during a planned or unplanned emergency occurrence. In this case, the approved provider or nominated supervisor will consult with emergency services and/or local authorities regarding the closure of the service, and inform families of the closure as soon as practicable to ensure immediate collection of children.

In the event of a planned closure, management will advise families as soon as reasonably practicable of details of the planned closure including the planned period of closure.

The service will notify the Department of Education of any closure, whether planned or unplanned, within 24 hours.

Induction and ongoing training

This policy will be accessible by service staff via the intranet and by families via the website. A hard copy of the policy will be available through the Service. Nominated supervisors are responsible for ensuring staff access to the policy and any supporting documents and undertake induction training prior to the policy being implemented. All service staff are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy and ongoing training will be provided using a range of learning platforms.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

Monitoring of compliance with this policy and the related procedure will be overseen by the policy owner. The review process for this policy will begin eight (8) weeks prior to the scheduled review date and include a consultation period with families, educators, compliance team and any other relevant stakeholders and will be facilitated by the Policy Officer.

All service staff will receive communication about any changes in or review of the policy or procedure. Training will be provided where required to ensure an understanding of the changes. Families will be notified of any changes 14 days prior to the implementation. Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in line with the MACSEYE Code of Conduct.

Related documents

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy
- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Bush Fire Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Supervision Policy

Legislative requirements

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS (NQS)	
Quality Area 2	Children's Health and Safety
Quality Area 7	Governance and Leadership
EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW ACT	
Section 174(2)(a)	Serious incident - Any emergency for which emergency services attended
Section 174(2)(c)	Any incident that requires the approved provider to close, or reduce the number of children attending the service for a period
Section 174(2)(c)	Any circumstance at the service that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child attending the service
EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW REGULATIONS	
Regulation 4	Definitions "multi-storey building" and "storey"
Regulation 12(d)	Meaning of a serious incident- any emergency for which emergency services attended
Regulation 97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
Regulation 98	Telephone or other communication equipment
Regulation 99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
Regulation 136	First aid qualifications
Regulation 168	Education and Care Services must have policies and procedures

Regulation 170	Policies and procedures are to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority

RELATED LEGISLATIONS

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

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.
Approved provider	A person who holds a provider approval (National Law). A provider approval authorises a person to apply for one or more service approvals and is valid in all jurisdictions.
Education and care service premises	In relation to a centre-based service, means each place at which an education and care service operates or is to operate.
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).
Emergency drill/rehearsal	A process to rehearse anticipated emergency scenarios or events, designed to help clarify roles and responsibilities, provide training and verify the adequacy of the emergency response.
Emergency services	Includes ambulance, fire brigade, police and state emergency services.
Evacuation plan	An evacuation plan is used where it is deemed necessary to evacuate the immediate area or building to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and adults.
Hazard	An unavoidable danger or risk, even though often foreseeable.
Lockdown	A security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from leaving or entering a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved.
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 or, in Western Australia, the Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012. This applied law system sets a national standard for children's education and care across Australia. See 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	In relation to an education and care service, means a person who: <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).
Person in day-to-day charge	A person is in day-to-day charge of an education and care service if:

Term	Meaning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the person is placed in day-to-day charge by the approved provider or a nominated supervisor of the service; and the person consents to the placement in writing (National Regulations). There are minimum requirements for the person in day-to-day charge.
Person with management or control	<p>In relation to an education and care service, means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if the provider or intended provider of the service is a body corporate, an officer of the body corporate within the meaning of the Corporations Act 2001 of the Commonwealth who is responsible for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or if the provider of the service is an eligible association, each member of the executive committee of the association who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or if the provider of the service is a partnership, each partner who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or in any other case, a person who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service (National Law).
Risk assessment	A systematic process of evaluating the potential likelihood and consequences of risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking.

Policy information

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Authorised Executive:	Managing Director	Responsible Manager:	Risk and Compliance Lead
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Version control		
Version	Date	Changes
1.0	09/08/2024	Policy developed