

# Physical Environment (Workplace Safety, Learning and Administration) Policy

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## National Quality Standard

QA2	2.2.1	Supervision - At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
QA3	3.1.1	Fit for purpose - Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
	3.1.2	Upkeep - Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
	3.2.1	Inclusive environment - Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
	3.2.2	Resources support play-based learning - Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
QA6	6.1.1	Engagement with the service - Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
	6.1.3	Families are supported - Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
QA7	7.1.2	Management systems – Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

## National Law

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

## National Regulations

Regs	82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol free environment
	99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
	100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
	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
167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
168(2)(a)(iii)	Education and care services must have policies and procedures on water safety, including during any water based activity
249	Declared approved services (other than declared approved family day care services)
251	Declared out of scope services
274	Swimming pools
285	Space requirements
286	School based children’s services operating before 1 July 2008—saving
287	Declared out of scope services—indoor space requirements

## EYLF

- LO2 Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation  
Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment
- LO4 Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity  
Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, enquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating  
Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another  
Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

## Aim

Gloucester PreSchool & Early Years Learning Centre provide a physical environment that is safe, appealing, constructive, well-maintained and welcoming to all individuals who use it.

## Related Policies

Animal and Pet Policy  
Chemical Spills  
Excursion Policy  
Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy  
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy  
Relationships with Children Policy  
Sandpit Policy  
Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy

## Implementation

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will provide a stimulating environment that continually engages children and fosters their learning and development while ensuring their safety and that of educators, families and visitors.

### Resources and Equipment

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- provide appropriately sized furniture and equipment in both indoor and outdoor settings for the age ranges at the Service.
- provide sufficient furniture, resources, materials, toys and equipment for the number of children and ensure they are developmentally appropriate.
- check that all equipment and resources meet Australian Standards and educators are trained in correct maintenance and assembly.
- ensure non-fixed play equipment in the grounds is less than one metre high and that educators can adequately supervise children at all times.
- place any outdoor climbing equipment, swings or slides on impact absorbing surfaces such as soft fall materials.
- maintain an up to date inventory/registry of equipment.
- select resources and equipment that reflect the cultural diversity of our families, local community and nation, including the culture and diversity of Australia's Indigenous community.
- actively seek the views of parents and families about our resources and equipment.
- advise educators and families about the purchase of new equipment and ensure a risk assessment is carried out.
- prepare an ongoing prioritised maintenance plan for the service at the beginning of each year, implement the plan throughout the year and organise maintenance systems (eg checklists, logs, building and equipment records).

### Button Batteries

Button batteries can cause extremely serious or fatal internal burns if swallowed. These will only be present at the service where absolutely necessary ie required in devices like TV remote controls, digital thermometers or medical devices. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure all staff:

- keep button batteries or devices containing these up high out of children's reach
- keep any personal items that may contain button batteries (eg car keys) away from children
- ensure compartments containing button batteries are secured tightly with a screw or other suitable lock
- immediately and safely discard any device where the battery compartment looks like it may easily break open (eg if dropped) in a location children cannot access
- immediately apply sticky tape to both sides of flat batteries before safely discarding them (as this avoids 'pole to pole' contact and makes them less attractive to children)
- are familiar with the signs that a child may have swallowed a button battery and immediately call an ambulance ie choking, drooling, chest pain (grunting), coughing, noisy breathing, vomiting or food refusal, bleeding from the gut (black or red vomit or faeces), nose bleeds, fever, abdominal pain, spitting blood or blood-stained saliva.

Educators will:

- provide a list of equipment or resources which need maintenance to the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor regularly. The list will prioritise maintenance requirements.
- introduce children to new resources and equipment, and teach them how to use and care for them appropriately.
- store equipment that should only be used under supervision in a secure place.
- allow children to use a trampoline only when they are directly supervised.
- regularly check equipment and resources to ensure they are clean and safe.
- ensure they comply with cleaning schedules for resources and equipment.

## **Facilities**

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- provide adequate, sufficient and accessible facilities for hand-washing, toileting, eating and sleeping. Toileting and hand-washing facilities will be accessible from our indoor and outdoor environments
- provide adequate, sufficient and hygienic facilities for nappy changing which are inaccessible to children if they are not directly supervised, and providing at least 1 properly constructed nappy changing bench for children under 3 years of age
- provide access to clean drinking water in our indoor and outdoor environments
- providing secure and hygienic laundry facilities
- provide a separate indoor space for children under 2 years of age
- ensure that the premises and grounds comply with building regulations (Local, State and Federal Government) and the Building Code of Australia in relation to fire, ventilation, lighting and safety glass
- provide appropriate and hygienic areas for food preparation
- complete a Building Safety Checklist of the premises and grounds every 6 months and ensure any work necessary meets Australian standards
- implement management plans to ensure the safety of educators, children, families and visitors if the service undertakes major renovations
- ensure there are at least 3.25 square metres of unencumbered indoor space for each child at the service (does not include passageways, bathrooms, food preparation areas, staff or administrative rooms, storage areas, kitchens unless primarily used by children as part of the program and any space not suitable for children) Space requirements may differ for services subject to savings provisions.
- ensure there are at least 7 square metres of unencumbered outdoor space for each child at the service (does not include areas like thoroughfares, car parks and storage sheds). Space requirements may differ for services subject to savings provisions.  
Indoor and outdoor space requirements do not apply to children being educated and cared for in:
  - an emergency for no more than two consecutive days the Service operates, or
  - exceptional circumstances where all the children are siblings in the same family, or the child is in need of protection under a child protection order.
- locate babies, toddlers and where possible children who cannot walk on the ground floor or near the easiest exit to a safe place where service is in a multi-storey building.

## **Environment**

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- include natural elements like plants, trees, gardens, rock, mud and water.

- provide adequate shading.
- adequately fence the environment.
- incorporate natural and artificial lighting, appropriate ventilation, heating, cooling and fresh air.
- include elements that challenge children and encourage appropriate risk taking for the child's developmental level.
- incorporate specific requirements for special needs children as seamlessly as possible.
- incorporate sustainable practices which develop environmental responsibility.
- ensure elements in the environment encourage children to explore, solve problems, create, construct and engage in critical thinking.

## **Layout**

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- organise the environment so children, educators and visitors can move around without disrupting children's activities.
- create spaces which encourage collaborative learning through group interactions and one-on-one interactions.
- create areas where children can engage in quiet, restful or independent activities.
- establish the environment so children can be adequately supervised at all times.
- provide space for administrative functions, consultation with children's parents and private conversations.
- keep plans about the arrangement of the rooms and outdoor spaces to show how our service creates inviting learning spaces, and document how the arrangement, resources and equipment contribute to children's learning.
- keep a record of any changes made to the physical environment eg rearrangement of rooms, additions/changes to outdoor environment

## **Activities**

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor and educators will:

- undertake regular risk assessments to ensure risk is minimised or eliminated at all times.
- provide adequate and ongoing training in risk management practices for new and existing educators, staff and volunteers.
- engage children in a wide variety of indoor and outdoor experiences.
- discuss safety issues with children (eg using toys or equipment) and involving children in rule setting to minimise or eliminate safety risks.
- cover unused power points with safety caps, securing all electrical cords and ensuring all double adaptors and power-boards are inaccessible to children.
- provide families with the latest child-related safety information.

## **Children's Groupings**

It is important that children have opportunities to interact with other children and educators in group situations. This contributes to their learning and development and helps children to develop respectful and positive relationships. When forming groups, the Nominated Supervisor and educators will consider whether the size and composition of the group is appropriate by considering whether children:

- are settled;
- develop secure relationships with educators and positive relationships with peers.

The Nominated Supervisor and educators will:

- base children's rooms and groupings on their age and/or development
- have open play time in the morning so all children can interact with children and educators from other rooms.

## Safety Checks

To ensure the safety of all children and educators, the Nominated Supervisor will ensure the following safety checks are carried out:

- a daily inspection of the premises before children arrive (use the Indoor and Outdoor Daily Safety Checklists attached to the policy) to ensure the Service is safe, secure, hygienic and that there are no dangerous objects on the premises or service grounds, for example sharps or poisonous flora and fauna, including a check of:
  - perimeters
  - fences
  - gates
  - paths
  - buildings
  - all rooms accessible to children
  - fixed equipment

Educators will wear gloves and use tongs to pick up any sharp objects (eg syringes) and place them in the 'sharp object box'. This box will be disposed of in line with local council recommendations. Any maintenance required will be immediately reported to the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor who will make the appropriate arrangements to have repairs carried out.

- Regular inspections of trees in the service grounds for overhanging, dead or dangerous looking branches as well as for any infestations or nests.
- Pest inspections by an accredited pest control company will be organised if there is an increased number of pests according to the services sustainability pest minimisation matrix. Any recommendations made by the company will be implemented if they will not compromise the health and safety of children and adults.

The Nominated Supervisor will keep records of pest inspections and findings, and records to verify completion of safety checks.

## Cleaning of Buildings, Premises, Furniture and Equipment

To ensure that cleaning is carried out regularly and thoroughly and the environment, resources and equipment are hygienic, the Nominated Supervisor will ensure educators and other staff:

- implement structured cleaning schedules (attached to the policy) to ensure that all cleaning is carried out regularly and thoroughly so that the service environment, resources and equipment are hygienic.
- use the least dangerous cleaning substance possible.
- use colour-coded cloths for cleans (eg red cloths are for cleaning) to eliminate cross-contamination of different areas.

- use different rubber gloves in each room which are then hung out to dry and air.
- wash and dry hands after cleaning and before returning to the children.
- clean and dry cleaning equipment between uses so germs can't multiply on the equipment.
- store cleaning equipment securely.
- wash dress-up and play clothes regularly in hot water and detergent.
- clean the service at the end of each day and throughout the day as the need arises.
- clean up accidents and spills as quickly as possible.

### **Use of Detergents**

Ordinary detergents will be used to help remove dirt from surfaces. Proper cleaning with detergent and warm water followed by rinsing, drying and airing time kills most germs as they are unable to multiply in a clean environment.

### **Use of 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.

Essentially, there is no ideal disinfectant. Disinfectants cannot kill germs if the surface is not clean. For disinfectants to work effectively, there needs to be thorough cleaning using a detergent beforehand. However, it is more important to make sure surfaces have been cleaned with detergent and warm water than to use a disinfectant. To kill germs, any disinfectant needs:

- to be of the right concentration;
- a clean surface to be able to get to the germs;
- enough time to kill the germs - at least 10 minutes.

Even when all of these conditions are met a disinfectant will not kill all the germs present.

### **Clothing**

Educators will:

- wash their clothing daily;
- wear protective garments (eg aprons) to cover clothing that cannot be washed frequently;
- have a change of clothes available in case of accidents.

### **Toys**

To avoid the spread of disease, the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will aim to buy:

- only washable toys where possible

To avoid the spread of disease, educators will:

- wash toys regularly for children 3 to 5 years of age where they are less likely to mouth toys. For child under 3 years of age wash toys at the end of each day, especially in younger children's rooms.

- immediately remove a toy that has been sneezed on, mouthed, soiled or discarded after play by a child who has been unwell, so it can be washed at the end of the day.
- wash toys in warm water and detergent (many can be washed in a dishwasher but not at the same time as dishes) and rinse in clean water.
- use a toothbrush or other tool to clean difficult to reach areas eg corners.
- take care cleaning toys that cannot be immersed in water eg wooden toys, rattles, toys with paper and cardboard and books, and wipe with a damp cloth and detergent.
- thoroughly dry toys and books before returning to use. All, toys, including cloth toys and books can be dried by sunlight. Items like LEGO and construction blocks can also be left to drain on a clean tea-towel overnight.
- regularly clean outdoor toys and protect from the weather to preserve their lifespan.

### Play Dough

To reduce the risk of spreading infections, educators will:

- store play dough in an airtight container in the refrigerator.
- make a new batch of play dough each week.
- discard play dough at the end of each day if there is an outbreak of vomiting and/or diarrhoea.

### Packing Toys Away

Educators will:

- pack equipment away in appropriate labelled storage boxes.
- complete puzzles before packing away if possible.
- Equipment will be stored safely in cupboards or identified storage areas.

## Hazardous Substances

When **purchasing** dangerous chemicals, substances, medicines or equipment, the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- select and use the least hazardous substance or equipment.
- only select substances which have child resistant lids or caps.
- ensure dangerous substances/chemicals are supplied with a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) formerly called a Material Data Safety Sheet.
- ensure educators adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for use, storage, and first aid recorded on the SDS.
- keep a register of all hazardous chemicals, substances and equipment used at the Service. Information recorded will include where they are stored, their use, any risks, and first aid instructions and the current SDS. The register will be readily accessible.

When **using** dangerous chemicals, substances, medicines or equipment, educators will:

- ensure the child resistant lids or caps are properly closed after use.
- adhere at all times to manufacturer's advice and instructions (eg follow advice for products which need to be stored in a refrigerated environment).
- wear appropriate personal protective clothing recommended on the manufacturer's instructions.

When **storing** dangerous chemicals, substances, medicines or equipment, educators will:



- store all dangerous substances in their original containers.
- keep all labels and/or use by dates intact at all times.
- dispose of (without using) any dangerous substance not stored in the original container, or with destroyed labels and/or unknown use by dates. Disposal will be carried out in line with local council guidelines. Containers will not be reused under any circumstances.
- lock all dangerous substances and equipment, including cleaning materials, detergents, toiletries poisons, dangerous tools and equipment with sharp and razor edges, in a place or facility which is labelled, secure and inaccessible to children.
- ensure that dangerous and hazardous materials such as pesticides, herbicides, petroleum, kerosene, solvents and equipment which is operated by an engine or hazardous to children are in a locked facility external to the main building of the Service and separate from children's play or outdoor environments. The facility must have a bonded floor, be inaccessible to children and be clearly labelled as storing dangerous substances and/or equipment.
- store any dangerous substances that need to be refrigerated in a labelled, child resistant container, preferably in a separate compartment or in a part of the refrigerator inaccessible to children.
- wear appropriate personal protective clothing recommended on the manufacturer's instructions.

### **First Aid**

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- seek medical advice immediately if poisoning or potentially hazardous ingestion, inhalation, skin or eye exposure has occurred by calling the Poisons Information Line on 131126 or Ambulance service on 000.
- immediately call 000 if there is any major emergency involving a hazardous chemical or equipment, a gas, fire or explosion hazard.
- implement the first aid procedures in the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy and, if required, the emergency procedures in the Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy, if a child or any other person is injured by a chemical, substance or equipment.

### **Other requirements**

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- notify the appropriate Workplace Health and Safety Authority if there is any major emergency involving a hazardous chemical or equipment, a gas, fire or explosion hazard or a child or any other person is seriously injured by a chemical, substance or equipment (refer Work Health and Safety Policy).
- regularly implement the Poison Safety Checklist attached to this policy to ensure we protect the health and safety of all children and adults at the service.

## **Kitchens**

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- children cannot gain access to any harmful substance, equipment or facility.
- a door, half-gate or other barrier prevents unsupervised entry by children into the kitchen

- the preparation of children’s bottles is both safe and hygienic at all times and separate from nappy change area.

## Laundry

- The laundry area includes a **washing machine** with hot & cold water supply for the laundering of soiled clothes and linen.
- Soiled clothes will be returned to families for laundering. They will be hygienically stored in wet bag supplied by the service until it is removed from the premises. Items to be returned to a child’s home for laundering, will have soiling removed, will be stored securely and will not be placed in a child’s bag in contact with personal items. Educators will advise families that there are soiled clothes in their child’s bag by a note on the electronic sign out message system.

## Sun Protection



The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and staff understand that correct sun protection practices reduce a child’s risk of developing skin cancer and eye damage later in life and ensure they obtain enough vitamin D from the sun to allow for healthy bone development and maintenance. They will implement all sun protection measures numbered 1-10 to fully comply with Cancer Council’s National SunSmart Early Childhood Program.

Sun protection times are a forecast for the time of day UV levels will reach 3 or above. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types.

Note overheated surfaces (eg metal, concrete, stone, sand, rubber, plastic, soft fall mats and synthetic grass) can cause serious burns to young children when daily temperatures are high. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure educators regularly conduct temperature checks of outdoor facilities and equipment when temperatures are high to assess the risk of burns to children and are adequately trained in this process. The Nominated Supervisor may require educators keep records of the dates, times and temperatures tested. Note if educators cannot comfortably leave their hand on a surface for five seconds, children may suffer burns before they can react to the temperature. Educators will plan indoor activities if there is a significant risk to children of burns from overheated surfaces ie surface temperatures are very high and/or children wearing shoes still risk burns if they sit, kneel or lie down on surfaces.

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and staff will:

- **use a combination of sun protection measures listed below whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.** In NSW, UV levels are high enough (UV 3 or above) to damage unprotected skin most months of the year. UV levels are particularly high during the summer months and highest in the middle of the day
- access local sun protection times and UV levels via the SunSmart widget which has been downloaded on the service website, the free SunSmart app, myUV.com.au or from the Bureau of Meteorology website [www.bom.gov.au/uv](http://www.bom.gov.au/uv).

## Sun Protection Measures

### 1. Scheduling Outdoor Activities

Educators and staff will use UV levels and sun protection times when planning outdoor activities including excursions.

### 2. Shade

The service will provide and maintain adequate shade for outdoor play. Shade options can include a combination of portable, natural and built shade. Regular shade assessments should be conducted to monitor existing shade structures and assist in planning for additional shade.

Outdoor activities will be planned to occur in shaded areas. Play activities will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns. Children will be directed to use available areas of shade when outside.

### 3. Hats

Educators, staff and children are required to wear sun safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears. A sun safe hat is:

- legionnaire hat
- bucket hat with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm)
- broad brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm).

Children without a sun safe hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, veranda or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat.

**Please note: Baseball caps or visors are not sun safe because they do not provide enough sun protection.**

### 4. Clothing

When outdoors, educators, staff and children will wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible. This includes wearing:

- loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline.
- longer style skirts, shorts and trousers. clothing that is made from cool, densely woven fabric.
- clothing with high UV protection factors (UPF), at least UPF15 but preferably UPF 50.

Children who are not wearing sun safe clothing can be provided with spare clothing or will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun.

**Please note: Midriff, crop or singlet tops are not sun safe because they do not provide enough sun protection.**

Note children who are playing outside on days where surface temperatures are high may need to wear shoes to minimise the risk of burns.

### 5. Sunscreen

All educators, staff and children will apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours. Parents are required to apply the

sunscreen to children prior to arrival in the morning. The preschool will have sunscreen available for parents to apply to their child/ren when they arrive each morning. Sunscreen is stored in a cool, dry place and the use-by-date monitored. Authorisation to apply sunscreen will be obtained from parents if their children use extended hours of care and education. Children and babies may not be able to play outside if we are not authorised to apply sunscreen.

#### **6. Babies (under 12 months)**

Educators will ensure babies are not exposed to direct sunlight and are kept in dense shade at all times. Educators will also ensure babies' skin is well protected. They will wear sun safe hats and clothing, and may have small amounts of SPF30 or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen suitable for babies applied to their exposed skin. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended. Babies clothing, hat and location in the shade will be checked regularly to ensure they continue to be well protected from UV.

#### **7. Role Modelling**

Educators and staff will act as role models and demonstrate sun safe behaviour by:

- wearing a sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses outside
- applying SPF30+ or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen
- using and promoting shade

Families and visitors are encouraged to role model positive sun safe behaviour.

#### **8. Education and Information**

Educators will regularly include learning about sun safety in the curriculum and review the resources available at Generation SunSmart [www.generationsunsmart.com.au](http://www.generationsunsmart.com.au) and SunSmart [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au) Educators will provide children with opportunities to take leadership roles in managing sun protection. For example children will be assigned duties regarding UV/sun protection time checks, hat reminders and management of sunscreen.

Positive messages about sun safety and sun protection measures will be included in communications with families eg through newsletters and our service website. Families will be encouraged to role model positive sun safe behaviour and use SunSmart measures when at the Service.

#### **9. Policy Availability**

The sun protection policy, updates and requirements (including hat, clothing and sunscreen) will be made available to educators and staff, families and visitors.

#### **10. Review**

Our service will monitor and review the effectiveness of our sun protection policy regularly, at least once every 12 months.

11. See our **Sun Safe UV procedure** for additional information.

## **Extreme Heat**

Extreme heat is usually defined as a period of abnormally and uncomfortably hot weather that could adversely affect people's health. Babies and young children are especially vulnerable to extreme heat. To protect the health of our children and educators/staff during periods of extreme heat educators will:

- Regularly offer children water to drink
- Regularly ask children if they would like to cool their faces with wet washers or by splashing water on their faces in the bathroom sink
- Regularly sponge the faces of babies using cool, wet washers
- Ensure children are dressed in cool clothing eg singlets, short sleeves
- Keep children indoors in a cool, comfortable environment with air conditioning or fans
- Organise water play activities inside
- Use awnings or blinds to block the sun, particularly on sides of the service facing the sun
- Cancel or postpone excursions and outdoor activities
- Check the storage instructions for medications and take appropriate action eg move medication to fridge or request new medication supply if extreme temperature likely to damage medication
- Listen for bushfire messages if in a bushfire risk area
- Ensure children, including siblings of children at the service, are never left in parked cars
- Make available the Victorian Government brochure 'How to Cope and Stay Safe in Extreme Heat' to families

Our cook will include cold meals and snacks on the daily menu eg salads

When the period of extreme heat has subsided educators will:

- Open the windows if there is a cool breeze
- Allow children outside following our sun safety procedures

If there is a complete loss of power during a heatwave, educators will implement service procedures for emergency power (see Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy). Families will be contacted to collect children if educators believe children's health is at risk from the heat.

## Water Safety

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators understand the risks that water hazards pose and will undertake measures to ensure health and safety of all children in the service environment and during excursions.

A water hazard is anything that can hold enough water to cover a child's nose and mouth and includes:

- sinks, basins, fish tanks, fish bowls, baths
- swimming pools, portable pools, spas
- water courses, ponds, sandpits, clam shells
- water troughs, containers and buckets used for play, animal drinking containers
- pooling water.

Educators will:

- complete a risk assessment before allowing children to engage in water based activities at the service or on excursion and ensure all risks are minimised or eliminated where possible.
- ensure no child swims in any water without:
  - written permission from parents.
  - appropriate educator/child ratios in place and adequate supervision.
- closely supervise children at all times and never leave any child unattended near water. This includes:

- constant monitoring of children within arm's length (1-2 metres)
  - careful and intentional positioning
  - scanning and moving around the environment
  - listening closely for sounds or the absence of noise
  - observing and anticipating children's behaviour
  - higher adult to child ratios if identified as requirement in risk assessment
  - presence of first aid trained staff
- ensure children with diarrhoea, upset stomachs, open sores or nasal infections do not swim or play in water.
  - ensure all children wear appropriate swimmers in a pool, go to the toilet before entering the pool, and follow correct toileting hygiene practices while in the pool.
  - remove all children immediately if a child passes a bowel motion in the pool, advise pool managers if at a public pool, disinfect and if practical empty a home pool or trough.

Services in New South Wales are not permitted to have pools unless they existed on the premises before 6 November 1996. To ensure a safe environment and prevent accidents and illnesses related to water based activities at the service educators will:

- fill wading pools with less than 300 mm of water.
- remove any items or objects that could be used to climb into the fenced area of a pool, trough, or water storage unit e.g. chairs, bins, bikes, any overhanging trees.
- display a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation guide prominently near any water.
- cover all water containers like ponds, spas, nappy buckets, bathtubs or ensure they are inaccessible to children.
- immediately empty all portable water hazards (eg buckets and water troughs) after every use and store in a way that prevents water collecting in them (e.g. upright/inverted).
- ensure children's play areas are safely fenced off from water hazards like rivers, dams, creeks, lakes, irrigation channels, wells.
- check grounds after rain or watering and empty water that has collected in holes or containers.
- ensure all pools and troughs in which children play are hygienically cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the instructions on the container. Educators will:
  - remove leaves and debris daily
  - hose away surface dirt
  - scrub inside with disinfectant and rinse it away before refilling

## Severe Storms and Lightning

The effects of severe storms and lightning can be catastrophic. Severe thunderstorms, for example, can produce large hail, damaging wind, lightning and heavy rainfall, which can cause death, injury and damage to property. Sometimes lightning may occur when there isn't a thunderstorm. Lightning may be seen, for example, during an intense bushfire or heavy snowstorm. It's important to remember that blue skies and lack of rain do not reduce lightning risk. People do not need to be hit directly by lightning to suffer injury. Electrical current can move along the ground or jump sideways from other objects.

The Nominated Supervisor will include severe storms and lightning activity in their risk assessment of potential emergencies, and all employees will take the steps identified to minimise the risks children and adults are exposed to during these events.

The Nominated Supervisor and educators will monitor storm activity using radar on the Bureau of Meteorology website [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au) or app or if this is not available listen to the local radio station for storm warnings and updates.

When a severe storm threatens the service the Nominated Supervisor and educators will:

- ensure all children stay inside the service until the storm passes, sheltering in the strongest part of the premises if necessary
- secure or store any loose objects in the outdoor environment that could blow around in strong winds
- shelter and secure any animals
- secure all external doors and windows eg tape/board up windows and glass entrances
- use sandbags if required
- disconnect all electrical items, aerials and computer modems - cover and/or move away from windows
- park service vehicles under shelter or cover with firmly tied tarpaulins/blankets.

While sheltering inside during a severe storm, the Nominated Supervisor and educators will ensure they and all children stay well clear of windows, doors and any skylights, close curtains/blinds and avoid using a fixed telephone unless absolutely necessary due to lightning danger. The Nominated Supervisor will continue to monitor storm activity and call emergency services if required.

It is unlikely children would be on an excursion or at a bush kindy site if severe weather or lightning is threatening as the Nominated Supervisor and educators would be monitoring weather conditions beforehand. However, if educators are caught outdoors with children as a severe storm approaches, they will immediately seek shelter in the strongest most enclosed structure available if they are unable to return to the service before the storm reaches them.

After a severe storm passes, the Nominated Supervisor and educators will inspect the outdoor environment for fallen power lines, broken furniture and equipment etc to ensure it is safe before letting children outside to play.

### **Lightning**

Lightning can strike more than 10 kms from the edge of a thunderstorm which is the minimum safe distance from a storm. If there is lightning activity, the Nominated Supervisor and educators will use what's known as the Flash to Bang rule. This involves counting the seconds between the flash of lightning and the bang of thunder as the storm approaches. Sound travels around 1 km every 3 seconds, so a count of 30 seconds means the storm is around 10 kms away. If the count nears 30, the Nominated Supervisor will ensure educators cancel all outdoor activities and move children inside or to a safe shelter if this is not possible. If the count is less than 30 educators will take immediate and urgent action to move children inside/to a safe shelter.

Educators will also use the Flash to Bang rule if there is an unexpected lightning storm while children are on an excursion or at a bush kindy site. In this case educators will seek shelter with the children in safe areas if they do not have time to return to the service. These include substantial, enclosed buildings, and enclosed vehicles if people do not touch any metal parts. Where these shelters are not available educators and children will shelter in hollows or on low ground, including clumps of low bushes and trees the same height eg forest, ensuring they are not the tallest objects in the area. Educators will remove any metal objects on their or the children's heads or bodies.

Educators will avoid sheltering with children in or near insubstantial structures like picnic sheds and shade shelters, metal structures like fences, gates, poles, high/open ground, water and isolated or tall trees. They will not use umbrellas as this is unsafe when there is lightning. Educators will immediately move to a new location with children if their hair stands on end or they hear 'buzzing' from nearby rocks, fences etc.

The Nominated Supervisor and educators will keep children inside or in a safe shelter for at least 30 minutes after the last thunder clap or lightning strike to ensure the storm is a safe distance away. They will continue to monitor the Bureau of Meteorology radar and observe outside conditions before letting children outside.

## **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.

## **Inspection and testing of electrical equipment**

Services must ensure that electrical equipment is regularly inspected and tested by a competent person if the electrical equipment is supplied with electricity through an electrical socket and used in conditions where it could be damaged, including exposure to moisture, heat, vibration, mechanical damage, corrosive chemicals or dust. A record of the testing, which may be a tag attached to the equipment tested, 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.

## **Fire Equipment**



All fire equipment at the service will comply with relevant laws and regulations, council requirements and the Building Code and be maintained in line with the Australian Standard AS 1851-2012 (see Attachment D).

## **Back Care and Manual Handling**

Manual handling means any activity requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person or object.

Manual handling injuries can be the result of incorrect manual handling techniques, overuse, or from accidents. Injuries include back strains and sprains in other parts of the body such as the neck, arm, shoulder and knee, bruising and lacerations.

Employers and managers have a legal duty to provide safe workplaces and implement safe workplace practices.

### **Principles 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.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- provide annual training in manual handling and back care.
- display written, current information regarding manual handling in the service.
- ensure equipment and facilities are designed and maintained to reduce manual handling injuries.
- ensure work practices are consistent with safe manual handling guidelines.
- ensure educators and staff follow safe manual handling procedures.
- identify, assess and control all risks associated with manual handling.
- clearly mark any equipment which requires more than one person to lift or move it.

To help prevent manual handling injuries educators and staff are encouraged to:

- do warm-up exercises for three to five minutes before starting work, particularly during cold periods. Simple exercises to warm and stretch all the major muscle groups help prevent injury. Regular exercise such as walking, tennis, or aerobics will help condition muscles. Anyone with neck, back or muscular problems should see a doctor before exercising.
- kneel rather than bend down eg to help a child put their shoes on.
- sit rather than bend eg to comfort a child, educators will sit on the floor and encourage the child to sit on their lap.

- sit in an appropriate sized chair (or on the floor) so their upper legs are horizontal to hips and feet flat on the floor.
- sit in an appropriate sized chair and table to complete writing tasks & data entry on electronic devices (eg programming).
- carry children with one arm under the child's buttocks and the other arm supporting the child's back, with the child facing them as close as possible to their body.
- not carry a child on their hip because this can strain the back and only carry children when necessary.
- lift safely and avoid twisting, especially with awkward loads.
- help larger children to climb up steps/ladder provided to change tables.
- use a step ladder to reach above shoulder level.
- avoid extended reaching forward eg leaning into low equipment boxes.
- share the load if the equipment is heavy, long or awkward.
- ask for help and organise a team lift when sliding, pulling or pushing equipment that is not easy to move e.g. trestles or gym mats.
- rearrange surroundings to meet the needs of both children and adults where possible.
- use equipment and furniture that can be moved around as safely and easily as possible.
- store seldom-used objects up high between the shoulder-to-raised arm height.
- use mechanical aids like ladders and trolleys where possible to avoid lifting and stretching.
- Reduce accidents by implementing good housekeeping practices including ensuring:
  - the floors and other walking surfaces are uncluttered, even and non-slippery;
  - the environment is tidy;
  - there is adequate space to work;
  - equipment is maintained regularly; and
  - lighting is adequate.

### **How to Lift Safely**

1. Place your feet in astride 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.

### **Avoid Twisting when Lifting**

To avoid injuries resulting from twisting, educators and staff will:

- 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 their strength.
- use beds and equipment that are easy to move.
- ensure they can see where they are going when carrying equipment or children.

- be especially careful when lifting a child with special needs.

### **Organising a Team Lift**

Educators and staff will:

1. Ask a colleague who is willing and able to help, and ideally is fairly well matched with them in size and strength.
2. Agree on a plan of action to achieve a coordinated lift.
3. Appoint one person as team leader to '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. When standing with feet together and hands by sides:

- the best height range for handling loads is around waist level
- the acceptable height for lifting is any point between a person's knuckle and shoulder.

## **Sources**

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Early Years Learning Framework

Dangerous Substances (National Code of Practice for the Labelling of Workplace Substances) Code of Practice Approval 2006

National Quality Standard

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011

Staying Healthy –Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services 2012

Work Safe Victoria: Children's services – occupational health and safety compliance kit

Swimming Pools Act 1992

Building Code of Australia

Australian Standards 1851-2005 "Maintenance of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment"

Cancer Council NSW Sample Sun Protection Policy

Royal Life Saving Society Home Pool Safety Checklist

Royal Life Saving Society Wading Pools Checklist

Australian Standard 1926.1 Swimming Pool Safety

Kidsafensw: Playground surfacing

Heat health plan for Victoria

Vic Govt Better Health: How to cope and stay safe in extreme heat

Cancer Council NSW and the National SunSmart Early Childhood Program

Bureau of Meteorology 'Preparation and safety during thunderstorms' Australian Government

[www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)

Get Ready Guide Qld Govt

Lightning Safety Recommendations NSW Sport and Recreation Outdoor Activities (based on Recommendations for lightning protection in sport, Makdissi and Brukner, Medical Journal of Australia 2002)

## Review

The Management, employees, families and interested parties will monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy annually or more regularly if required.

- Reviewed by: Elizabeth Price  
Date: 20/07/2023  
Position: Nominated Supervisor  
Signature: *Elizabeth Price*
- Accepted by Committee Member:  
Name: *Emma Maleklou*  
Date: *24/07/2023*  
Position: *Secretary*  
Signature: *E Maleklou*
- Previously reviewed: 09/07/2022  
Date for next review: 20/07/2024

### Environmental Checklists

The following can be used as a guideline to produce Checklists for the service's individual needs.

#### Checklist: Outdoor

- **Building maintenance** – regularly maintain and check for hazards, check building is in a safe, clean and hygienic condition. Keep records of any damages and subsequent repairs.
- **Dust mites, pet allergens** – regular dusting and vacuuming.
- **Fence-** outdoor play areas securely on all sides of from roads, water hazards, and driveways. Maintain fences at correct height. Install childproof self locking devices on gates.
- **Garbage** – safely and promptly disposed of. 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** - kept 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.
- **Pesticides** - dangerous chemicals should not be used to remove vermin.
- **Renovations** – reduce dangers e.g. lead, asbestos, holes and excavations.
- **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** - minimise 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.

#### Checklist – Indoor

- **Access for children and adults with disability** - ensure safe access into, within and out of the Pre-School; 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 of children who have additional supervision needs, i.e. court orders or additional behaviour management needs.
- **Choking hazards** - e.g. small toy parts, beads, nuts, blind and curtain cords, plastic bags, sandwich bags and balloons are removed.

- **Decorations and children's artwork** – aren't near ceiling fans, air conditioners or heaters. Avoid use of tacks, pins, and staples.
- **Emergency evacuation** –evacuation plan and emergency contact numbers displayed, families informed and evacuation procedures rehearsed.
- **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.
- **Guard and make inaccessible to children:** heaters, coolers, fireplaces, stoves, microwaves, power points and office equipment.
- **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 to keep it below the temperature at which a child can be scalded (Any new hot water installations in early childhood services are required to ensure water delivered from the tap does not exceed 45° 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 kept on premises and plans to obtain new pets. Ensure pets are vaccinated, wormed, don't have fleas, are 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.
- **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 closed at all times.
- **Smoke free environment** in all areas.
- **Educators personal items** – ensure personal items such as bags, sharp instruments, toiletries and medicines are kept secure and are inaccessible to children.
- **Stairways, ramps, corridors, hallway, external balcony** are 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 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, including when changing nappies or washing children.
- **Toys** – meet safety standards, age appropriate, maintained and non-toxic.

## Poison Safety Checklist

Week beginning: \_\_\_\_\_

Checklist	Yes	No	Action required
Have all chemical products been checked to determine if they need to be stored in a lockable cupboard?			
Have all chemical products been checked to determine if they require disposal (out of date or no longer required)?			
Are all chemicals labelled correctly?			
Are food and chemicals stored separately?			
Are all chemicals stored securely?			
Are Safety Data Forms available for all chemicals in the Service and placed with the chemical?			
SDS Register available?			
SDS Register Current?			
Are containers for soiled nappies securely covered and the contents inaccessible to children?			
Are low toxicity products used whenever possible?			
If any handbags contain medication, are they stored safely?			
Is the Poisons Information Centre number available at every phone? (13 11 26)			
Is there any paint flaking of the walls that may contain lead?			
Have all poisonous plants been removed from the Service's premises?			
Have families been provided with information on poison safety?			
Have chemical storage areas been labelled with chemicals stored here signs?			
Medication is stored in locked containers/cupboard?			

Educators Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Educators Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Cleaning Schedule

	Wash DAILY plus when visibly soiled	Wash WEEKLY plus When visibly soiled
<b>Bathrooms</b> - wash tap handles, toilet seats, toilet handles and door knobs. Check the bathroom during the day and clean if visibly dirty	✓	
<b>Toys</b> and objects put in the mouth	✓	
<b>Surfaces</b> the children have frequent contact with eg bench tops, taps, cots and tables	✓	
<b>Door knobs</b>	✓	
<b>Floors.</b>	✓	
<b>Low shelves</b>		✓
<b>Other surfaces</b> often touched by children		✓



## Attachment D

### Fire Equipment and Maintenance

Key	
<b>Inspection Procedure of Fire Safety Installations (F.S.I)</b>	1. Inspect for obvious visual faults. 2. Inspect for faults and witness test of F.S.I by a competent person. 3. Inspect for faults where possible and accept logbook details of F.S.I. 4. Check Building file for details of any extra requirements.
<b>Required Record of Keeping Fire Safety Installations (F.S.I)</b>	L = Log book required R = Record of maintenance required T = Metal tag on F.S.I or service details/service label (Y) = Weekly test may be omitted refer AS 1851-2005

External agencies will be employed to assist the service with this maintenance if no currently employed staff or educators are qualified to complete the maintenance checks.

Special Fire Service	Inspection Procedures for FSI	Required Record Keeping for FSI	Maintenance Schedule							Annual Survey of Installation	Maintenance Standard or Building Preference
			1 Wk	1 Mth	3 Mth	6 Mth	12 Mth	3 Yr	5 yr		
Fire Mains	1					Y	Y	Y			1851-Section 2 & 4
Fire Hydrants (including internal & external hydrants, boosters connection/s and water storage tanks)	2	L-T				Y	Y		Y	Y	1851- Section 4
Fire Pump sets	2	L-T	(Y)	Y		Y	Y		Y	Y	1852 – Section 3
Fire Hose Reels	2	R-T				Y	Y			Y	1851- Section 14
Fire Extinguishers (Portable)	2	R-T				Y	Y		Y	Y	1851- Section 15
Fire Blankets	2	R-T				Y					1851-Section 16

