



Wangaratta Children's Services Centre
Water Safety Policy 2023

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Department	Children's Services
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Authorising Officer	Director Community and Infrastructure
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National Quality Standard

2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
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.

National Regulations

Section/regulation	Description
Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulation 25(1)(c)	Additional information about proposed education and care service premises
Regulation 26(1)(l)	Application for service approval – family day care – swimming pool
Regulation 101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
Section 102C	Conduct of risk assessment for transporting of children by the education and care service
Regulation 115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
Regulation 116	Assessments of family day care residences and approved family day care venues
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 169	Additional policies and procedures – family day care service
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
Regulation 274	Swimming pools (NSW only)
Regulation 345	Swimming pool prohibition (Tasmania only)

Statement and Purpose

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to water play, excursions near water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the Service environment.

Policy and Procedures

Children will be supervised at all times during water play experiences to help keep children safe in and around water and support children's learning in a safe environment.

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, Approved Providers, Nominated Supervisors, students, volunteers and visitors (including contractors) of the Service.

Implementation

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.

[\[https://kidsafe.com.au/water-safety/\]](https://kidsafe.com.au/water-safety/)

Water Hazards

The National Regulations make reference to '*water hazards*'; however, the term is not expressly defined. In this policy, a water hazard is defined as anything that can hold 5cm of water and fit a child's nose and mouth and a 'water hazard' may include:

- large bodies of water such as dams, creeks, river or pooling water, swimming pool, portable pools and spas, jetted bathtubs (or Jacuzzis)

- fishponds
- smaller bodies of water such as baths, mop buckets
- sinks, basins
- water features, such as a wishing well
- containers for feeding animals
- water troughs, containers for paddling- clam shells
- beach

Roles and Responsibilities

Management/ Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met
- keep a child safe environment
- ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios)
- ensure risk assessments are undertaken and water hazards and risks associated with waterbased activities are taken into consideration
- ensure first aid and CPR qualifications and requirements are met at all times
- undertake risk assessments for excursions near water and for water-based activities
- take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders
- take reasonable steps to inform and support educators and staff of their responsibilities in implementing the policy and procedures at all times
- guide and mentor educators and staff to be able to follow the policy and procedures

Educators will:

- reinforce water safety messages within the children's education program
- make sure water hazards are managed as outlined in your procedure, e.g. water trough is emptied and packed away as soon as play has ended
- ensure buckets that contain liquids are not accessible to children
- empty, safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers when they are not in use, e.g. mop buckets, nappy buckets, bathtubs, water troughs, pet water containers

- ensure water troughs or containers for water play will be supervised at all times and containers or troughs will be emptied after use
- inspecting indoor and outdoor environments for potential water hazards, particularly during and after wet weather.

Breaches

Any breaches of this policy will be managed by Council's Family and Early Children's Services Coordinator for action in consideration of the Centre's Code of Conduct and any Council governing documents.

Human Rights

This policy has considered and complies with the Human Rights and Responsibilities contained in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

Gender Impact Assessment

This policy has considered and applied Council's Gender Impact Assessment Template and satisfies the provisions established in the *Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)*.

Definitions

Term	Meaning	Source
ACECQA – Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.	acecqa.gov.au
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. 	Guide to the NQF (Operational Requirements – Quality Area 2)
Approved first aid qualifications	A qualification that includes training in the matters set out below, that relates to and is	National Regulations

	<p>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:</p> <p>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.</p>	(Regulation 136)
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>For the purposes of the definition of serious incident in section 5(1) of the Law, each of the following is prescribed as a serious incident: (a) the death of a child— (i) while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service; or (ii) following an incident occurring while that child was being educated and cared for by an education and care service; (b) any incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child occurring while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service— (i) which a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or (ii) for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital; Example: A broken limb. (c) any incident involving serious illness of a child occurring while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital; Example: Severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis reaction. (d) any emergency for which emergency services attended; (e) any circumstance where a child being educated and cared for by an education and care service— (i) appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for; or (ii) appears to have been taken or removed from the education and</p>	National Regulations (Regulation 12)

	care service premises in a manner that contravenes these Regulations; or (iii) is	
	mistakenly locked in or locked out of the education and care service premises or any part of the premises.	
Hazard	Situations or things that have the potential to harm a person.	Glossary Safe Work Australia
Water hazard	Any water body that poses a potential drowning risk to children and could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large bodies of water, such as rivers, creeks, dams, ponds, swimming pools, jetted bathtubs (or jacuzzis), inground 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. 	dlgcommunities.wa.gov.au

References

- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014). ACECQA.
 (2021). Policy and procedure guidelines- *Water Safety Guidelines* Early
 Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011)
 Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations (2017).
 Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).
 KidSafe (2021). Water Safety. <https://kidsafe.com.au/water-safety/>
 National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC): www.nhmrc.gov.au
 NSW Department of Health: www.health.nsw.gov.au
 Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).
 Victoria Government. Better Health Channel. Water safety for children.
Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations

Review

This policy must be reviewed at least every three years, or whenever required due to legislative or operational change.

Version History		
Version Number	Date of change	Reasons for change
1.0	September 2023	Re-formatting and restructure of Council's Children's Service policy framework