Water Safety Policy

Policy first issued	22nd August 2016
Current review date	6th August 2024
Personnel responsible	Childcare Operations

NQS 3 Physical Environment

NQS

QA 2	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
QA 3	3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings, are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
	3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
	3.2.1	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, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.

National Regulations

Regs	103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
	104	Fencing and security
	105	Furniture, materials and equipment
	107	Space requirements – indoor
	108	Space requirement – outdoor space
	115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
	156	Relationships in groups

Aim

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators understand the risks that water based activities pose and will undertake measures to protect the health and safety of all children involved in water based activities.

Implementation

Educators will:

- Complete a risk assessment before allowing children to engage in water-based activities at the Centre 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
- Ensure all children with diarrhoea, upset stomachs, opens sore 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.

To prevent accidents and illnesses related to water based activities at the Centre, educators will:

- Fill wading pools with less than 300mm 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 in pool area.

- Ensure pool securely fenced if over 300mm deep. All pools, including inflatable or portable wading pools that are capable of being filled with more than 300mm of water must be fenced.
- Cover all water containers like ponds, spas, nappy buckets, bathtubs or ensure they are inaccessible to children.
- Immediately empty all wading pools / water troughs etc. 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, disinfected and chlorinated (larger pools) in accordance with the instructions on the container.
  For wading pools and troughs, educators will:
  - Remove leaves and debris daily
  - Hose away surface dirt
  - Scrub inside with disinfectant and rinse it away before refilling

Water Play Safety

It is acknowledged that children can drown in a depth of water as little as a few centimetres. When water play is offered in the program as a sensory experience, educators will not use more than a water depth of 5cm in the container used to hold the water. All water activities are actively supervised and the water is removed from the container immediately once the activity has ceased. No water will be left to sit in containers overnight and water is refreshed daily as a minimum standard.

Within our sustainability practices, our Centre may include an environment created as an ecosystem for animals. These areas may include ponds. The area will be covered with a non-child removable mesh that is fixed to the area and will be located in a gated and securely enclosed area. Educators will directly supervise children in the area and children are not permitted in that area unattended at any time.

Bathroom Water Safety

Children are supervised in bathrooms at all times, ensuring that the water is drained from water troughs and hand basins. Educators supervise children and assist them while toileting, educating children on correct usage of toilets for hygiene and safety purposes.

Water Safety and Pets

Where the Centre has pets that require water, a risk assessment will be conducted for each pet. Drinking water for pets will be held in a dish no deeper than 5cm or a drinking bottle. Fish will need to be housed in a securely sealed aquarium and small open fish tanks / bowls will not be used in the Centre.

Educator Safety

It is acknowledged that water is a heavy object. Educators will conform to the Centre's manual handling guidelines when moving vessels containing water. Where possible the water should be removed and large quantities of water should not be physically lifted.

Drinking Water

The Centre will provide children with safe drinking water. Educators will ensure that the drinking water offered to children is hygienic and fresh from the kitchen tap. No child will consume water from water taps located in the laundry or bathrooms of the Centre.

Hot Water

Hot water may be involved in children's cooking experiences within the educational programs in the Centre. The educator will conduct a risk assessment for all cooking experiences in conjunction with the Centre Director around cooking experiences offered.

Educators will never walk through children's rooms carrying hot water, nor will hot beverages be allowed in the children's spaces or storerooms. All boiled water for children's drinking must be cooled in the kitchen prior to being placed in the fridge in the Nursery room unless there is a secure prep room available. Boiled water and kettles will be provided and are restricted to the secure prep room. At no time are children permitted in the prep rooms.

Key Responsibilities

Management must:

- Ensure that educator to child ratios are maintained at all times.
- Ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times when near water hazards.
- Conduct a risk assessment in relation to any water hazards.
- Conduct a regular safety check of the Centre premises.
- Ensure that a staff member with a current first aid certificate is immediately available at all times.
- Ensure that details of current approved first aid qualifications are filed with each staff member's record.
- Report serious incidents to Department of Education and Training (DET).
- Report notifiable incidents to Work Safe.
- Provide current information to parents about water safety.
- Ensure that water safety awareness is embedded in the curriculum.

Educators must:

- Provide adequate supervision at all times.
- Adjust supervision strategies to suit the activities being undertaken.
- Maintain a current approved First Aid qualification.
- Ensure gates and other barriers restricting access to water hazards are closed at all times.
- Ensure that containers of water located in room (including mop buckets) and outdoors, are in full view of educators.
- Check the outdoor learning environment at the beginning and end of each day for puddles and filled containers.

Families must:

- Supervise children in their care, including siblings, while attending or assisting at the Centre.
- Informing themselves about water safety and ensure their children understand the risk associated with water.

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually. The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Last reviewed: 6 August 2024
Date for next review: August 2025