

Water Safety Policy

Policy Statement

This Policy outlines the Service's approach to water safety at the service and during excursions. The safety and supervision of children are the highest priority when children have access to water. This policy covers hot water, drinking water, hygiene practices with water, and water play. It also includes safe storage of equipment used for water play

Children's access to clean water for drinking and for washing their hands is important for their health and wellbeing. In addition, access to water play affords children the opportunity for open-ended, exploratory and sensory play which contributes to their development and learning. It also develops environmental awareness.

Links to Education and Care Centres National Regulations 2018, National Quality standard 2018

Regulations

- 100 Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
- 101 Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
- 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures

NQS 2 Children's Health and Safety
NQS 7 Governance and Leadership

Procedures:

- Families can be provided with water safety information including water safety in the home and the availability of learn-to-swim programs in the local community. Brochures are placed on the centre noticeboard, in newsletters and via the centre facebook page.
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) posters are displayed prominently throughout the Centre.
- Educators intentionally teach children about staying safe in and around water.
- Children have ready access to clean drinking water at all times, and are regularly offered water throughout the service opening times.
- Children are discouraged from drinking any water used in the play activities.
- All water troughs and containers are emptied and hygienically cleaned at the end of each water play activity, allowed to dry thoroughly to prevent the build-up of potentially harmful bacteria such as mould, and then stored in an area inaccessible to children.
- Educators and children wash and dry their hands after each water play activity to reduce the risk of cross-infection.
- Buckets used for cleaning are kept out of children's reach, emptied immediately after each use and stored in an area inaccessible to children.

Water conservation is embedded in the Service's practices

- only the amount of water required to undertake programmed water play is used
- water used in water play is emptied onto gardens
- water play is discontinued during water restrictions, and the reasons explained to the children
- educators encourage children to turn taps off to avoid wastage

- Educators model and intentionally teach children water conservation, and provide parents with information to continue the Centre's conservation message at home.
- Adults are not to consume hot drinks in areas accessed by children, including on excursions.
- The temperature of hot water accessible to children is maintained at 38 Celsius or below in accordance with the AS 3500.4.

Water Safety in relation to excursions

- The Nominated Supervisor is to complete an Excursion Risk Management Plan prior to every excursion. As part of the risk assessment, particular attention is focused upon water safety whenever the excursion is near a body of water, and upon supervision implications.
- The service will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children are able to enjoy water-based excursions safely.
- The Regulations do not specify a specific educator to child ratio for activities where water is a feature. The number of educators present is to be determined by a risk assessment of the proposed activity. It must also be noted that in sections 165, 167 and 169 of the National Law there are clear statements about adequate supervision. A range of factors shall determine the adequacy of supervision, including:
 - Numbers, ages and abilities of the children
 - Number and positioning of educators
 - Each child's current activity
 - Areas where children are playing, in particular the visibility and accessibility of these areas
 - Risks in the environment and experiences provided to children
 - Educators' knowledge of each child and each group of children, the experience, knowledge and skill of each educator.

A risk management plan will be undertaken for all excursions near or at bodies of water. Please refer to the service's Excursion Policy.

Definition of a body of water

The service recognises the following locations are bodies of water:

- Swimming pools and /or water fun parks
- Wading pools
- Lakes
- Ponds
- The sea / ocean
- Creeks
- Dams
- Rivers
- Equipment used by the service that could contain 5cm or more of water and would allow a child to submerge both nose and mouth at the same time.

Comments:

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