

Water Safety

OSHC Policy & Procedure

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1. Policy

1.1 Policy Statement

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to water play, excursions near water, safety around hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the Berry Street Yooralla OSHC Service ('the OSHC Service'). 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.

The OSHC Service follow these policy principles:

- The safety, health and wellbeing of children is our number one priority. All water-based activities will be adequately supervised and no child will be left unattended when in proximity to water
- Water-based play is an important part of our children's healthy growth, learning, wellbeing and development. Our educators and other staff ensure that all precautions are employed to safeguard children during these experiences.
- Clear roles and responsibilities ensure that management, educators and other staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to water safety.
- We create opportunities for children to learn and develop. This includes incorporating water safety awareness into the educational program.

1.2 Purpose

To ensure the safety and supervision of children in and around water. This includes water play, excursions near water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the Out of School Hours Care Service environment.

1.3 Background

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 sinks, pet drinking bowls, ponds, pools, water features, water tanks are all potential drowning hazards. [<https://kidsafe.com.au/water-safety/>]

1.4 Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor and visitors of the OSHC Service.

1.5 Legislation & Standards

QUALITY AREA 2: Children's health and safety		
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

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
Sec. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Sec. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
12	Meaning of a serious incident
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursions
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
168(2)(a)(iii)	Education and care service must have policies and procedures in relation to- Water safety, including safety during any water-based activities
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedure
176	Time to notify the certain information to the Regulatory Authority

1.6 Key Terms

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.	www.acecqa.gov.au
Adequate Supervision	An educator can respond immediately 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)

<p>Approved first aid qualifications</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>National Regulations (Regulation 136)</p>
<p>Risk Assessment</p>	<p>A systematic process of evaluating the potential likelihood and consequences of risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking.</p>	
<p>Serious Incident</p>	<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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the death of a child— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. which a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or 	

	<p>ii. for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital; Example: A broken limb.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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—</p> <p>i. appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for; or</p> <p>ii. appears to have been taken or removed from the education and care service premises in a manner that contravenes these Regulations; or</p> <p>iii. is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the education and care service premises or any part of the premises.</p>	
<p>Hazard</p>	<p>Situations or things that have the potential to harm a person</p>	
<p>Water Hazard</p>	<p>Any body of water that poses a threat of drowning risk to a child or children. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -large bodies of water - dams, rivers, creeks, dams, swimming pools, portable spas, fountains, water play troughs • smaller bodies of water- baths, buckets, containers that collect water, pet bowls. 	<p>ACECQA Water Safety policy guidelines</p>

2. Procedure

2.1 Operational Safety

- Educators will discuss with the children the use of water tank water and how it differs from drinking water
- Hot water accessible to children will be maintained at the temperature of 45.C° which will be tested annually. [Australian standard AS 3498]
- Hot drinks are not to be consumed near children by educators, students or visitors
- Water for pets at the Service must be changed daily, with the exception of fish tanks, and only be accessible to children when educators are present.

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor / Manager will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adhere to all obligations under the Education and Care National Law and Regulations • ensure educators, staff, students and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed • ensure all educators, staff and volunteers participate in a comprehensive induction and refresher training that includes an understanding of child safety, CPR • complete detailed risk assessments that identify and assess risks associated with any water hazards and water-based activities • ensure water hazards and water play are always highly supervised including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ direct and constant monitoring of children ○ careful and intentional positioning of educators ○ scanning and moving around the environment ○ observing play and anticipating behaviour ○ ensuring higher adult to child ratios ○ ensuring no child is left unattended when in proximity to water • provide direction and education to educators, staff and families on the importance of children's safety and supervision in and around water • ensure health and safety practices incorporate approaches to safe storage of water and water play • ensure premises adjacent to or providing access to any water hazards that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times (e.g. dams, swimming pool) are to be isolated from children by a child resistant barrier or fence • ensure there are no items near fencing that children could climb up onto to gain access to a water hazard (pot plants, boxes, chairs) • conduct a risk assessment in accordance REG 101 prior to taking children on an excursion which is near water- consider any water hazards and any risks associated with water-based activities before an excursion/incursion is approved • ensure at least one educator who holds a current approved first aid qualification that was attained within the previous three years (Reg. 136), is in attendance at all times including emergency life support and cardio pulmonary resuscitation • display a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) guide near any

	<p>swimming pool, wading pool, or body of water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure hot water is inaccessible to children including hot drinks accessed by educators, staff or families • notify parents as soon as practicable but within 24 hours if their child is involved in an incident/accident at the Service or while under Service care • ensure details of the incident/accident will be recorded on an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record • notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours of becoming aware of a serious incident • conduct a review of practices following any water-related safety incident including an assessment of areas for improvement within the policy and associated procedure
<p>Educators will:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide active supervision when children are participating in water activities including: • supervise children near water at all times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ never leave children alone near any water ○ direct and constant monitoring of children ○ scanning and moving around the environment ○ observing play and anticipating behaviour • ensure that any body of water with a depth greater than 3cm is inaccessible to children at all times and is guarded with an effective barrier at all times (child proof fence/ grate over the water) • complete a daily Safety Inspection of premises to ensure that all hazards are known and minimised • When a hazard or potential hazard is detected, Educators will complete a risk assessment to address any concerns and children will be excluded from the area until the hazard has been rectified. • utilise water activities in appropriate weather as part of the planned program • allow the children the opportunity to experiment with water, sand, and mixing materials • incorporate water safety awareness into the educational program • monitor all taps on the premises that children have access to and ensure they are turned off securely when not in use • safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers • empty wading pools immediately after every use store to prevent the collection of water, e.g., upright • check for and empty any water that has collected in holes or containers after rainfall or watering gardens • ensure water troughs are not used without a stand to keep it off the ground • ensure children remain standing on the ground whilst using the water trough • ensure buckets of water for soaking toys or clothing are inaccessible to children • ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level and emptied into the garden areas after each use • discouraged children from drinking from any water activities for health and safety • ensure Educator areas have Staff only signs on doors to remind adults to close doors behind them

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they teach children about staying safe in and around water • ensure wading pools are hygienically cleaned AND disinfected appropriately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ on a daily basis remove leaves and debris, hose away surface dirt and scrub inside with disinfectant. ○ wash away disinfectant before filling pool ○ children with diarrhoea, upset stomach, open sores or nasal infections should not use the pool ○ all children should wear appropriate swimwear / bathers, go to the toilet before entering the pool, and follow correct toilet hygiene practices while in the pool ○ remove all children immediately, empty and disinfect the pool should a child pass a bowel motion whilst in the pool. ○ empty the wading pool at the end of each use ○ follow emergency procedures and contact emergency Services if a child appears to be missing or unaccounted for or is involved in a serious incident or accident – ○ follow the Administration of First Aid Policy after any incident involving a water-based activity, including contacting 000 if a child is found unresponsive or has inhaled water ○ reflect on practice and share strategies during staff meetings to maintain and improve child safety around water.
Families	
Children	

2.3 References & Resources

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
 ACECQA. (2023). [Policy and procedure guidelines- Water Safety Guidelines](#)
 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).
[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023)
 KidSafe (2021). Water Safety. <https://kidsafe.com.au/water-safety/>
 Victoria Government. [Better Health Channel. Water safety for children.](#)

2.4 Related Policies and Procedures

Administration of First Aid Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Excursion/Incursion Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Sun Safe Policy Recreational Aquatic Program Procedure
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3. Policy & Procedure Review

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy and procedure have been achieved, Yooralla will:

- Regularly seek feedback from educators, staff, parents/guardians, children, management and all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy.
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice.

- Revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required.
- Notify all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (Regulation 172 (2)).

The ongoing monitoring and compliance to this policy and procedure will be overseen by the OSHC Manager, Nominated Supervisor and Yooralla Quality, Risk and Safeguarding team.

All Yooralla OSHC policies and procedures will be reviewed every 12 months.

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