

[H3.26]

Water Safety Policy

Applies to: Educators, Staff, Students, Volunteers, Children, Families, Visitors of the Service.

Specific responsibility: OOSH Nominated Supervisor, OOSH Responsible Persons, all OOSH Staff

Version: 2

Date approved: May 2020

Next review date: May 2022

Policy context:

Links to Regulations and Law

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW) No 104a

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

Education and Care Services National Regulations [NSW]

- Regulation 100 Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
- Regulation 101 Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
- Regulation 102 Authorisation for excursion
- Regulation 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures

Links to National Quality Standards and Elements

- Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice
 - Standard 1.2: Practice
 - Element 1.2.1: Intentional teaching
- Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety
 - Standard 2.1: Health
 - Element 2.1.2: Health practices and procedures
 - Standard 2.2: Safety
 - Element 2.2.1: Supervision
 - Element 2.2.2: Incident and emergency management
- Quality Area 3: Physical Environment
 - Standard 3.2: Use
 - Element 3.2.3: Environmentally responsible

Linked Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excursion Policy • Behaviour Guidance Policy • Sun Protection Policy • Child Safe Environment Policy • Supervision of Children Policy • Sustainability Policy • Death of a Child or Staff Member Policy • Child Protection Policy • Health and Safety Policy
Other Documentation/Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Time, Our Place • Work, Health & Safety Act 2011 • Risk Assessments • Safety Checks • Authorisation Records

Policy Statement

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to water play, excursions near water, and hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the Service environment. Children will be supervised at all times during water play experiences.

Kariong Outside School Hours Care will plan experiences with appropriate levels of challenge where children will be encouraged to explore, experiment and take appropriate risks (“My Time, Our Place”, Outcome 4), including the use of water as a medium for play in both the outdoor and indoor environment and on excursions.

Procedure

Educators will explain expectations of behaviour to all children before & during water play activities to ensure the safety & well-being of all participants. See **Behaviour Management Policy**

- Definition of a body 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.

A. Water Safety in relation to excursions (See Excursion Policy)

- The service recognises the risks posed by bodies of water. The service will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children are able to enjoy water-based activities safely. Risk assessments will be carried out for programmed water-based activities.
- Whilst the Regulations do not specify a specific educator to child ratio for activities where water is a feature, the recommended excursion ratio of 1:10 is considered best practice and this may need to be adjusted should the water be risk assessed to pose a higher hazard such as unfenced water areas, areas where there will be a large group of children etc. A ratio of 1:5 is recommended for excursions where children are swimming and entering the water above their ankles. 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.

B. Water safety in relation to water-based activities within the service (See Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy)

- Water use within the service will be supervised to ensure that the safety of children, and educators is a priority. The hygienic state of water will be assessed before it is used for children's play.
- At the completion of the activity the water containers will be emptied and the containers turned upside down or packed away. Educators will ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level. Children will be discouraged from drinking from these water vessels.
- Children will be instructed in the safe use of equipment used during water-based activities, for example, slip and slide, water pistols, bubble machines, etc.
- Any buckets of water that may be used for cleaning or hand washing will not be left unsupervised near the children and will be emptied immediately after use
- The children's play areas will be checked each morning to ensure that no containers or pools of water are accessible to children. If rain occurs during the day, outdoor play areas will be checked for safety prior to the children entering the outdoor environment.
- Staff will reinforce the water conservation message to embed sustainably practices in children.
- Water restrictions will be taken into consideration when planning and programming water-based activities

Responsibilities of Approved Provider

- 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 water-based activities are taken into consideration
- 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 ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures
- ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers, and available for inspection
- notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will:
 - affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or
 - significantly impact the service's education and care of children or
 - significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.

Responsibilities of Nominated Supervisor

- ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios)
- inform families about water safety practices at the service
- ensure first aid and CPR qualifications and requirements are met at all times
- ensure that at least one educator, staff member or nominated supervisor who holds a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance at all times that children are being educated and cared for by the service
- 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.

Responsibilities of Educators

- 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.

Responsibilities of Parents

- To provide children with sun safe water play clothes & provide spare dry clothes and a towel (See **Sun Protection Policy**)
- To read and assess the service's Risk assessment in regard to water play either in service or on excursions.
- To sign the Excursion Authorisation form (in Vacation Care) to give their permission for their child/ren to attend

Record of Review

Version Effective Date	Review Date	Lead by	People consulted	Review Approved
May 31 2021	May 2022	OOSH Administrator/ Nominated Supervisor Jacqui Pearson	Kariong OOSH Educators	Gail Ransley Chair: Governance Sub Committee June 29 2021