Rostrevor Kindergarten

Water safety policy

National Quality Standard Area 2 | Children's health and safety

Children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that safeguards and promotes their health, safety, and wellbeing.

Purpose

This policy provides instructions in relation to managing water safety, including during water-based activities.

All education and care services must have a local water safety policy in place that outlines how they will manage water safety, including during water-based activities, based on a completed risk assessment (*Education and Care Services National Regulations (R 168 (2) (a) (iii)*).

Site leaders must also consider water safety and potential water hazards when undertaking a risk assessment for an excursion, including a routine excursion (*Education and Care Services National Regulations R 101 (2) (b)*).

Employees must use the department's *Incident and Response Management System (IRMS)* and select the New hazard or corrective action reporting function to report and assess water hazards, including rating the level of risk and corrective actions. Contact Work Health and Safety on (08) 8226 1440 or at *education.WHS@sa.gov.au*, for advice about reporting hazards.

Site leaders must also consider water safety and potential water hazards when undertaking a risk assessment for an excursion, including a routine excursion *(Education and Care Services National Regulations R 101 (2) (b))*. Refer to the *camps and excursions* page and the *risk management plan for sports, adventure, camps, and excursions*.

A copy of this policy and the department's preschool water safety procedure is kept in our site's Preschool Policy Compliance folder, which is located on the shelf in the office.

This policy applies to all staff at this site.

Detail

Children are most at risk of drowning because they love to play with water and are naturally drawn to it, they do not understand the danger, and they are top heavy (their head is large in comparison to their body), and they have a tendency to fall. The most common factor for childhood drowning is lack of active supervision; a child can drown silently in as little as 5cm of water, in less than 20 seconds.

Conducting risk assessments

To meet requirements under the National Regulations and to ensure the safety of children when playing with in/near/around water and during water-based activities, we will…

> Conduct risk assessments at least once every 12 months, and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstances that may affect the safety of children in relation to water safety.
> Use the *Risk Assessment - Water hazards TEMPLATE*, which addresses the matters required under the Education and Care Services National Regulations (R 168 (2) (a) (iii)).
> Make any necessary updates to this procedure as soon as practicable after a risk assessment is completed.
> Keep a copy of all completed risk assessments.

Water hazards

A water hazard is anything that can hold 5cm of water and fit a child's nose and mouth. There are a number of water hazards in children's learning environments, including…

> Sinks, basins, fish tanks/bowls, baths.
> Swimming pools, portable pools, spas.
> Water courses, ponds, sandpits, clam shells.
> Water troughs, containers and buckets used for play, animal drinking containers.
> Pooling water.

Managing water hazards

Site leaders must complete risk assessments that identify and assess risks associated with any water hazards and water-based activities. Risk assessments must address:

1. **Active supervision** – children must be actively supervised at all times when there is a risk of access to any water hazard. Active supervision includes…
   > Direct and constant monitoring of children – within arm's length (within 1 – 2 metres).
   > Careful intentional positioning.
   > Scanning and moving around the area.
   > Listening closely for sounds or the absence of noise.
   > Observing play and anticipating behaviour.
   > Higher adult/child ratios, noting family day care standards apply for swimming activities.

2. **Eliminating** hazards – water must be emptied immediately after use and stored in a manner that prevents the vessel filling with water when not in use. All aspects of the environment must be designed to ensure adequate drainage of water to avoid pooling.

3. **Restricting** access – compliant fencing or barrier.

Risk assessments are then reported and assessed using the department's *Incident and Response Management System (IRMS)*, including rating the level of risk and corrective actions.

Water courses and ponds

> Water courses must be designed so that the depth of the water, at any point, is less than 300mm.
> Where a pond (or any other water collection area) has, or has the potential to, pool water at a depth greater than 300mm, then the area is to be fenced with swimming pool fencing compliant with *AS 1926.1:2007*.
> Appropriate controls must be implemented to ensure pond water does not become stagnant – refer to *Outdoor learning environments standard*.
> A sub-surface bubbler is preferred to remove the need for hoses and portable equipment.
> Water courses are, where possible, to be directed into areas that have suitable drainage systems to avoid pooling such as sand and garden areas. Fishponds and water features should have a rigid barrier over the water to prevent children from falling in.

Water troughs, buckets, and other water receptacles

Water receptacles must be emptied immediately after use and stored upside down and out of children's reach. Access to laundry and kitchen areas must be restricted when unattended by adults.

Excursions

A risk assessment is conducted when considering excursions (including routine excursions) where water safety and potential water hazards are present.

Supporting information and references

> Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority Water Safety Policy Guidelines | https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-08/WaterSafetyPolicyGuidelines.pdf

> Kidsafe and Department for Education water safety in education and care settings information sheet | https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/people-and-culture/work-health-and-safety/kidsafe/Water_safety_in_education_and_care-settings.pdf

> Risk management policy | https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/controlled-policies/risk-management-policy.pdf

> Reporting critical incidents, injuries, hazards, and near misses procedure | https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/controlled-procedures/reporting-critical-incidents-injuries-hazards-and-near-misses-procedure.pdf

> Risk management procedure | https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/controlled-procedures/risk-management-procedure

> Preschool water safety procedure | https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/controlled-procedures/preschool-water-safety-procedure.pdf

> Outdoor Learning Environments Standard | https://www.education.sa.gov.au/docs/infrastructure/property-services/outdoor-learning-environments-standard.pdf

> Safety management | https://edi.sa.edu.au/hr/for-managers/health-and-safety/safety-processes/safety-management#title4

> Notifiable incidents | https://edi.sa.edu.au/hr/for-managers/health-and-safety/safety-processes/notifiable-incidents

> Critical incidents, injury and hazard reporting | https://edi.sa.edu.au/hr/for-managers/health-and-safety/critical-incident-and-injury-reporting

> Camps and excursions | https://edi.sa.edu.au/operations-and-management/school-preschool-and-fdc-admin/school-administration/camps-and-excursions

> Water safety for preschools | https://edi.sa.edu.au/operations-and-management/school-preschool-and-fdc-admin/preschool-and-early-childhood-management/water-safety-for-preschools

> Managing risk – access tools, resources, and guidelines | https://edi.sa.edu.au/the-department/audit-and-risk/risk-management-tools-resources-guidelines

> Water Safety in Education and Care Settings | https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/people-and-culture/work-health-and-safety/kidsafe/Water_safety_in_education_and_care-settings.pdf

> Outdoor learning environments standard | https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/infrastructure/capital-programs-and-asset-services/Outdoor-Learning-Environments-Standard.pdf

> Risk Assessment - Water hazards TEMPLATE | https://schoolssaedu.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/PreschoolPolicyCompliance/Shared%20Documents/General/Templates/Risk%20Assessment%20-%20Water%20hazards%20TEMPLATE.dotx?d=wfd5eb01aa626430bba6314029f767525&csf=1&web=1&e=Z09sVr

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