



Emergency Evacuation and Lock Down

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Policy Statement

The safety and wellbeing of all staff, children, families, and visitors in our preschool is priority. A proactive approach guides our planning for the reduction or minimisation of emergency situations. Emergency and evacuation situations in an education and care service can arise in a number of circumstances and for a variety of reasons. In the event of an emergency or evacuation situation, the safety and wellbeing of all staff, children, families, and visitors to the centre is paramount.

Policy Goals

Our preschool is committed to identifying risks and hazards of emergency and evacuation situations. Planning for their reduction or minimisation, and ongoing review of planned actions around handling these situations include:

- Ongoing risk assessment and reviews of all potential emergency and evacuation situations, including medical emergency situations (see *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*).
- Development of specific procedures around each potential emergency and ensure full awareness by all staff through the provision of induction and professional development.
- Regular rehearsal and evaluation of emergency and evacuation procedures in line with regulatory responsibilities.

Strategies; How will it be done?

Risk Assessment for Potential Emergencies

A risk assessment is conducted to prepare for potential emergencies and evacuation procedures relevant to our preschool. Risk assessments are stored electronically and a hard copy in the file cabinet and includes:

- Detailed risk assessment and control measures of potential emergencies the preschool may be exposed to. Documentation is assessed and updated periodically and as circumstances change. Detailed, specific procedures to follow in the event of any emergency or evacuation include:
 - Natural disaster
 - Fire or smoke
 - Bomb threat
 - Snake or other potentially dangerous animal
 - Act of terrorism
 - Chemical or hazardous leaks and spills
 - Loss of power or water
 - Intruders
 - Outbreak of infectious disease or illness
 - Death of a child or adult

- A copy of the emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions are displayed in a prominent position in the foyer near each exit at the preschool.

- Staffing rosters ensure that at least one Educator holds a current approved first aid qualification and has undertaken current approved anaphylaxis management training and approved emergency asthma management training is immediately available in the event of an emergency.
- Emergency telephone numbers are clearly displayed above every telephone.

Discovering an Emergency

- Educators who discover an emergency are required to alert the Responsible Person immediately so that they can determine and implement control measures.
- After immediate assessment, the Responsible Person will then sound whistle for **EVACUATION** or discreetly but clearly announce to staff **LOCKDOWN**, depending on the type of emergency.

Evacuation Drills and Emergency Evacuation

- Emergency and evacuation drills are rehearsed every three months by the staff, volunteers and children present at the preschool on the day of the rehearsal and the Responsible Person in relation to the preschool who is present at the time of the rehearsal.
- Each drill is documented to include the date, time, how many people are in the building according to attendance registers, how many people evacuated, the time it takes to evacuate, what simulated emergency conditions (if any), any problems encountered, weather conditions, and any additional notes. This documentation is kept for a minimum of three years.
- Simulated emergency conditions consider a variety of practice styles such as scenarios in the rooms, around the yards, and out of the grounds.
- There is an emergency pram that is to be used for any children not walking during evacuations. This pram is to be checked regularly and maintained in a sturdy condition to ensure its safety at all times.

- Emergency whistles are provided in designated areas throughout the preschool. Each staff member also has their own whistle to be carried at all times. Whistles are only to be used for evacuation purposes.

After the Emergency is Over

- In the event that the building is unsafe to return to, the Responsible Person will notify parents or emergency contacts to collect each child.
- If able to return to the building, with reassurance and calmness, walk back to the preschool following the safety procedures, recheck that all children have returned and discuss as developmentally appropriate the emergency that has taken place.
- Consider counselling services for anyone affected by the emergency.

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider will:

- Ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children at the preschool from harm and hazards that are likely to cause injury (Section 167).
- Ensure the identification of potential emergency and evacuation situations that may arise at the preschool and risks associated with such situations.
- Ensure the following documents are current:
 - Risk assessment – reviewed on an annual basis.
 - Emergency and evacuation procedures; and
 - Emergency evacuation floor plan.

- Ensure educators and staff have ready access to an operating telephone or similar means of communication and that emergency telephone numbers are displayed near telephones.
- Ensure educators and staff have ready access to emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers and fire blankets, and that staff are adequately trained in their use.
- Ensure that emergency equipment is tested as recommended by recognised authorities.

Nominated Supervisor will:

- Implement duties as listed above and directed by the Approved Provider.
- Ensure the emergency evacuation procedures and floor plan are displayed in a prominent position near each exit and that all staff and educators are aware of these.
- Ensure that all staff are trained in the emergency evacuation procedures.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of emergency evacuation points.
- Ensure that families are regularly reminded of the emergency procedures in place at the preschool.
- Ensure that rehearsals of emergency and evacuation procedures are regularly scheduled and rehearsed, every three months as a minimum, and that the schedule maximises the number of children and staff participating in the procedures.
- Ensure that spontaneous rehearsals take place to ensure staff participate in the simulation of an unplanned, emergency evacuation events.
- Provide staff with evaluation/feedback forms after each scheduled and spontaneous rehearsal to assist in refining their risk management procedures around the safe evacuation of staff and children.
- Ensure all scheduled, spontaneous and actual evacuations are documented and reviewed.

- Ensure all staff are provided with feedback forms after each evacuation.
- Ensure all emergency contact lists are updated as required.

Early Childhood Educators will:

- Ensure the attendance record accurately reflects the attendance of each child.
- Ensure the time of arrival and departure is noted in the attendance for every child.
- Sign in/out on the staff attendance record.
- Display the emergency procedure in a prominent position.
- Practice the external procedure by different exits.
- Practice the internal procedure.
- Be familiar with evacuation procedures in each area of the preschool.
- Ensure all items in emergency bags are present.
- Check the number of children regularly throughout the day.
- Provide children with learning opportunities about emergency procedures.
- Be alert to the immediate needs of all children throughout the scheduled practise of emergency procedures.
- Assist the Nominated Supervisor in identifying risks and potential emergency situations.
- Assist the Nominated Supervisor in developing procedures to lessen the risks associated with emergency evacuations.
- Be confident to locate and use operating communications equipment and emergency equipment.

Families will:

- Be familiar with the preschool emergency and evacuation policy and procedures and the emergency management plan.
- Ensure the completion of the attendance records on delivery compliant with arrival and departure policy and procedures.
- Provide emergency contact details at the time of enrolment and ensure that all details are kept up to date.
- Follow the directions of staff in the event of an emergency or when rehearsing emergency procedures.

Monitor, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the preschool will review this Policy every 3 years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the preschool will ensure that families of children enrolled at the preschool are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the preschool; a family's ability to utilise the preschool; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected

Relevant

Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 167, 169
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 97, 98, 168(2)(e)

- Work, Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 Regulation 43

Guidelines, Standards and Frameworks

- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety – Standard 2.2 Health and Safety

Sources and References

- 2021, Community Early Learning Australia (CELA).
- Australian Standards: Emergency control organisation for buildings, structures and workplaces (AS 3745–2002)
- NSW Department of Education: Incident Reporting
- Community Early Learning Australia – CELA’s Simple Guide to bushfire advice for children’s services: 2020 update:
<https://www.cela.org.au/2020/12/04/bushfire-advice-2020>
- NSW Department of Education – Bushfire and Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery:
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/emergency>
- NSW Department of Education – Early Childhood Education Emergency and incident management resources:
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/emergency>

Updated

April 2024

Review Date

2027 or when procedure, practice or legislation changes.