



## BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH & SAFETY

#### POLICY NAME: WATER SAFETY

##### POLICY STATEMENT

Our organisation has a responsibility to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of each child at all times. The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to managing water safety including any activity involving water play, excursions near water, safety around hot water, and hygiene practices with water in the service environment. 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.

##### BACKGROUND

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require Approved Providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for managing water safety, including safety during any water-based activities. According to Kidsafe (the recognised authority on the prevention of injuries in children), drowning continues to be one of the main causes of fatalities of Australian children. Every year a number of children drown or were in 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 a lack of supervision. A child can drown in as little as a few centimetres of water.

##### OVERALL STRATEGIES / HOW WILL IT BE DONE?

- 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.
- Whilst water hazards at our service are kept to a minimum, we acknowledge that hazards still exist and include but are not limited to; cleaning buckets, water troughs, sinks and toilets, therefore diligent supervision is required at all times.
- Create opportunities for children to learn about and incorporate, water safety awareness into the educational program.

##### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

###### THE APPROVED PROVIDER AND NOMINATED SUPERVISORS WILL:

- Ensure there are policies and procedures in place for managing water safety and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.
- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure all staff (including casual staff) receive information and induction training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the Water Protection Policy, their responsibilities in implementing it, and any changes that are made over time.
- Ensure students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy.
- Ensure educators are adequately supervising children at all times and are protecting them from harms and hazards during any water activities.
- Where possible, ensure higher adult to child ratios for water based activities and ensure the careful and intentional positioning of educators.
- Conduct risk assessments that identify and assess risks associated with any water hazards and water-based activities.
- Conduct a risk assessment prior to taking children on an excursion, considering any water hazards and any risks associated with water-based activities before an excursion is approved.
- Ensure grey water systems or water tanks are labelled with "do not drink" signage and that children are not accessing this water for drinking.
- Ensure at least one educator or holds a current First Aid qualification, approved emergency Asthma management and approved Anaphylaxis management training.
- Ensure health and safety practices incorporate approaches to safe storage of water and water play.
- If any water hazards are identified, direct educators on the necessary action to take.
- Ensure the thermostat on the hot water system is set to a medium temperature to ensure children are not able to scald themselves when washing hands.



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- Ensure an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record is completed if a child is involved in an incident/accident while at the service, and the parent/guardian is informed on the same day.
- Ensure the Regulatory Authority is notified within 24 hours of becoming aware of a serious incident via the [NQA-ITS](#).

### EDUCATORS WILL:

- Provide active supervision when children are participating in water activities by:
  - Direct and constant monitoring of children – ensuring no child is ever left unattended near water
  - Scanning and moving around the environment
  - Observing play and anticipating behaviour
- Embed water safety messages into the children's education program.
- Discuss with the children the difference between filtered and grey water and ensure they know that grey water is for the purpose of play and not for consumption.
- Ensure clean drinking water is available at all times.
- Utilise water activities in appropriate weather as part of the planned program.
- Ensure water troughs or containers for water play are:
  - Only filled while in attendance by an educator at all times
  - Filled to a safe level
  - Emptied immediately after no longer in use
- Monitor all taps on the premises that children have access to and ensure they are turned off securely when not in use.
- Do not leave cleaning buckets in areas accessible to children and ensure they are emptied immediately after use.
- Clean up any spillages immediately.
- Ensure the Start of Day Checklist is completed to identify any water hazards, if found these will be removed or reported to the Responsible Person who will advise on what to do next.
- Check for and empty any water that has collected in holes or containers after rainfall or watering gardens and empty or prevent children from accessing.
- Never have hot drinks in any area accessible to children.

### FAMILIES WILL:

- Be encouraged to reinforce water safety practice with their children.

### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our Water Safety Policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance, or any incidents related to the policy. This review will be conducted in consultation with children, families, and staff.

### CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Standard 1	Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture
Standard 3	Families and communities are informed and involved
Standard 5	People working with children are suitable and supported
Standard 7	Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
Standard 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

#### 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 AND NATIONAL LAW

Sec. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Sec. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
25(1)(c)	Additional information about proposed education and care services premises



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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
126	Centre based services-general educator qualifications
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 and procedures
176	Time to notify the certain information to the Regulatory Authority

### STATUTORY LEGISLATION & CONSIDERATIONS

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 \(Amended 2023\)](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations \(Amended 2023\)](#)

### SOURCES

Acknowledgement to Community Early Learning Australia and Childcare Centre Desktop.

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2025).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2023 ) [Water Safety. Policy Guidelines.](#)

Australian Government Department of Education. (2022). [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0](#), 2022.

Department of Education. (2019) Incident Notification and Response.

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017). (Amended 2023).

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2025). [Guide to the National Quality Framework.](#)

KidSafe (2021). Water Safety. [Education and Resources: Water Safety.](#)

Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2025).

### RELATED POLICIES

- Educational Program Policy
- Excursions and Incursions Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy
- Physical Learning Environment Policy
- Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy
- Sun Safety Policy
- Supervision Policy

### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Excursion Risk Assessment
- Risk Assessments for Water-Based Activities

POLICY REVIEWED	NEXT REVIEW DATE	POLICY REVIEWED BY
OCTOBER 2025	OCTOBER 2026	Charlotte Parnaby
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual policy maintenance</li> <li>• Updated legislation and other links where necessary</li> </ul>	
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	POLICY REVIEWED BY
MAY 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New policy format</li> <li>• Child Safe Standards added</li> <li>• Regulation amendments incorporated</li> </ul>	Prue Ritchie
JANUARY 2021		Prue Ritchie