

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY



OBJECTIVE

RECC aims to be a Centre where children, staff and visitors feel and are safe within the environment. This is achieved by ensuring staff are trained to provide a safe environment and having clear plans for the management of emergency situations.

STRATEGIES

A range of strategies are employed by staff and management to ensure the RECC environment is a safe one:

- Children are supervised at all times, with particular emphasis on supervision of children on changing tables, while climbing on play equipment, with any type of water play, toilet usage and while on excursions.
- Staff shall discourage unsafe play by monitoring types of games and use of materials e.g. throwing of hard objects or sand.
- Staff shall check sandpit, tanbark, perimeter fence and general play areas for glass, other hazardous materials and spiders on a daily basis, signing on the relevant checklist when completed.
- Staff shall ensure that potentially dangerous products are inaccessible to children in accordance with the Dangerous Products Policy.
- Staff shall ensure that spillages are cleaned up immediately to reduce the risk of slipping.
- Staff receive regular training to ensure they are familiar with medical, emergency and accident procedures.
- Staff receive regular training to ensure they are familiar with their obligations to immediately report unsafe equipment or hazardous situations to the Director.
- Emergency procedures shall be prominently displayed throughout the Centre and emergency drills conducted every three months in accordance with the Emergency and Evacuation Procedure to ensure staff and children are familiar with the procedure.
- As part of the education program, children are taught safety skills including personal safety and awareness of the danger of touching unfamiliar animals, insects and dangerous plants. The Centre's safety practices (room rules etc) are discussed with children.
- If the Director is not at the Centre, the assistant Director or an experienced Room Leader with a supervisory certificate is clearly identified as the person in charge.
- Room leaders are required to hold a current first aid certificate.

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- When purchasing new toys and equipment or accepting donated toys and equipment, all items are checked to ensure they are safe (for example, do not pose a choking threat to children).
- All staff are responsible for questioning strangers entering the centre regarding their presence and ensuring that visitors have signed in and out in the Visitors Book. Visitors must always be escorted when in the Centre.

PROCEDURE FOR DETERMINING RESPONSIBLE PERSON

In accordance with the National Regulations, at all times that the Centre is operating there is one person designated as the Responsible Person in charge of the Centre. The nominated Responsible Person of the centre is displayed at all times in the Foyer through the movement of the label 'Nominated supervisor' or 'Supervisor in charge' between photos of Centre staff on the display board. A record is also maintained in the office documenting the responsible person.

Generally, the Responsible Person at the Centre will be the Nominated Supervisor (the Centre Director). When the Nominated Supervisor is not on duty, Certified Supervisors have agreed to be the Responsible Person, to ensure that during all operating hours there is a responsible person present at the Centre.

At RECC, the Assistant Director, Lead Educator and several Room Leaders are Certified Supervisors and take on the responsibilities of the Responsible Person when the Nominated Supervisor (Centre Director) is not on duty. All of these people are required to maintain a Supervisor's Certificate in accordance with the National Regulations.

The Responsible Person, although in charge of the centre, does not take on the responsibilities of the Nominated Supervisor. The Nominated Supervisor (Centre Director) has overall charge of the Centre and ensures that there is consistency and continuity in practice. The Nominated Supervisor (Centre Director) is responsible for ensuring adequate senior staff at the Centre have Supervisor's Certificates and have a clear understanding of the role of the Responsible Person. The Nominated Supervisor (Centre Director) is also responsible for ensuring that a responsible person is physically present at the Centre at all times that the Centre is operating when developing the staff roster.

RELATED POLICIES:

Arrivals, Departures and Access to the Centre Policy

Behaviour Guidance and Management Policy

Child Protection Policy

Dangerous Products Policy

Emergency and Evacuation Procedure

Excursion Policy

Hygiene Policy

Programming and Planning Policy

Risk Management Policy

Work Health and Safety Policy

Safe Environment Policy

SOURCES:

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority 'Guide to the National Quality Standard', October 2011.

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.