

# WORK HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY



## OBJECTIVE

This policy outlines Reid Early Childhood Centre's (RECC) commitment to providing a healthy and safe environment for children, staff and visitors to the Centre. The policy complies with the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011.

## DEFINITIONS

The WHS Act 2011 uses key words and acronyms. How these terms relate to RECC is explained below.

**PCBU:** The Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking has the primary accountability for the organisation's compliance with the WHS Act. In RECC's case, the President of the Management Committee has this accountability and the term PCBU relates to RECC as the employer.

**Officer:** An Officer is a person involved in making key decisions about the organisation's operations and includes the Director and members of the Management Committee. The Officers must support the President by exercising due diligence to ensure that RECC complies with its WHS obligations and duties.

**Worker:** A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for RECC. This includes employees, casuals and volunteers. In general terms a worker is referred to as an employee with RECC.

**Workplace:** A workplace is a place where work is carried out for RECC. This includes any place where an employee goes, or is likely to be, while performing work and includes training venues and excursions.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy identifies the roles and responsibilities allocated to each individual within the Centre. It is noted that, while the Nominated Supervisor carries the day to day responsibility to provide and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health and safety of all employees within the Centre is the ultimate responsibility of the Management Committee.

### Committee Members

The Management Committee are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy.

Reviewed and updated in July 2015 with approval from RECC Management Committee

## Work Health & Safety Policy

In fulfilling their WHS obligations, the Management Committee's role is:

- to gain an understanding of the operations of the business and the hazards and risks involved
- to ensure appropriate resources and processes are provided to enable hazards to be identified and risks to be eliminated or minimised
- to ensure information regarding incidents, hazards and risks is received and the information is responded to in a timely way
- to ensure the PCBU has, and implements, processes for complying with any legal duty or obligation
- to ensure processes are verified, monitored and reviewed.

### Nominated Supervisor and Senior Educators

The Nominated Supervisor and Senior Educators are collectively responsible for the effective implementation of the Centre's WHS policy. The Nominated Supervisor and Senior Educators work to achieve a healthy and safe workplace by:

- fulfilling WHS responsibilities, according to the WHS Act and associated Regulations, through the development and application of policies and safe work standards;
- applying Regulations and Standards specific to the childcare industry within the Centre in addition to ACT WHS Legislation, Regulations, Standards and Codes of Practice;
- addressing both the childcare industry hazards and workplace specific issues through regular WHS inspections and risk management processes;
- ensuring that the practical application of RECC's policies and WHS checklists are periodically revised and consistent with centre health and safety objectives;
- providing accurate and appropriate information, induction, training and supervision for all employees (such as the correct use of equipment and substances within the Centre); and
- providing employees with access to WHS incident reporting tools to record any event of workplace injury, illness or near-miss so that appropriate corrective measures can be applied to prevent recurrence and the Centre's health and safety performance can be accurately monitored.

### Employees

Staff members play an integral role in the practical application of WHS policies and procedures. The Nominated Supervisor/Senior Educators will assist employees to understand their WHS responsibilities in the workplace, which include:

- a duty of care to take all reasonably practicable steps for their own health and safety and of others in the workplace;
- act in accordance with the safety directions and procedures documented in RECC's policies, legislation and supporting documents;
- participate in mandatory WHS training;
- will not intentionally interfere with or misuse items or facilities provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare of all RECC's employees;

## Work Health & Safety Policy

- report all accidents and incidents including injuries, illnesses and near-misses to their Senior Educator and/or Nominated Supervisor; and
- engage and consult with the appointed health and safety representative regarding WHS issues as well as their Senior Educator and/or Nominated Supervisor

### Health and Safety Representative

RECC has one appointed health and safety representative (HSR). The HSR is provided health and safety representative training through an accredited training organisation to support them in fulfilling the duties of the role. The HSR's role is:

- to represent the WHS interests of employees;
- to provide WHS induction training for new employees;
- to monitor the measures taken by RECC management committee to comply with the legislation;
- if required, to investigate WHS complaints; and
- will liaise between the Nominated Supervisor and staff members regarding WHS matters

### Non-employees and Visitors

RECC has a duty of care to protect the health and safety of other persons at or near the workplace in addition to employees and children. Centre facilities are maintained to protect employees and will therefore be safe for non-employees as well. Regular visitors (eg: providers of the music and physical education programs) are given a WHS induction similar to that provided to new employees.

Visitors should act in an appropriate manner to ensure the safety of themselves and others when on the Centre's premises.

### Consultation and Communication

Employees WHS interests and concerns are discussed at management committee meetings. This forum provides open and responsive communication and consultation between management and employees of the Centre to ensure that health and safety issues are regularly monitored and risks are managed appropriately.

WHS is a standing agenda item at the monthly staff meeting. All employees are encouraged to discuss WHS matters and improvements in an open and proactive manner. Any changes to the Centre's WHS practices and policies will be advised by the Nominated Supervisor as soon as practical as part of the ongoing WH&S training and awareness.

### **ESSENTIAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

The Centre maintains accurate records regarding matters relating to the health, safety and wellbeing of employees. Records held by the Centre includes for example:

- WH&S policy and inspection checklists;
- incident reports;
- maintenance records, including first aid and safety equipment;

## Work Health & Safety Policy

- workplace inspections and action plans; and
- risk assessments and risk management decisions.

ACT Work Safe is the Regulator and can attend RECC workplaces to inspect, investigate, and audit RECC's compliance with WHS legislation. The Director will make supporting documents available to inspectors from ACT Work Safe where required, personal information will not be released without relevant authority.

The WHS Act includes penalties for non-compliance which can be applied to RECC, its Officers and its employees.

### **RELATED POLICIES:**

Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Child Protection Policy

Evacuation Procedures Policy

Incident Reports, Investigation and Notification Policy

Manual Handling Policy

Medical Emergencies Policy

Safe Environment Policy

Standard of Conduct Policy

### **SOURCES:**

[www.worksafe.act.gov.au/health\\_safety](http://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/health_safety)

Work Health Safety Act 2011

Work Health Safety Regulations 2011

Work Health Safety Codes of Practice