

WATER SAFETY POLICY



OBJECTIVE

Children at Reid Early Childhood Centre (RECC) may encounter water either at the Centre or on planned excursions. Exposing children to a range of outdoor spaces and environments, including water, plants, trees, edible gardens, rocks, mud and other elements from nature is important to promote learning and development (Standard 3.2). As environments involving water in particular often have a higher risk of injury, it is necessary that appropriate precautions are taken at all times.

This policy has been developed to satisfy the *Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011* (the Regulations) which requires RECC to have policies and procedures in relation to water safety, including safety during water-based activities (regulation 168(2)).

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (the Act), RECC must ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children being educated and cared for by the service from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury (section 167).

Risk:

Noun: a situation involving exposure to danger.

Verb: Expose (someone or something valued) to danger, harm or loss.

Risks (and/or hazards) include any experience involving water play or excursions near water, such as dams, lakes, streams, drains, fish-ponds, pools and puddles.

Providing all children with a safe environment means identifying possible risks, assessing the risk and implementing appropriate strategies to safeguard the children in our education environment and whilst in our care and during excursions. Examples of appropriate strategies may include management oversight, specific procedures related to water activities or increased supervisor ratios.

PROCEDURES

In accordance with the Regulations, a risk assessment for an excursion must consider any water hazards and any risks associated with water-based activities (regulation 101(2)). Refer to the Excursion Policy for the detailed requirements for completing a risk assessment before an excursion is undertaken and adherence to regulation 101 and 102. Educators are to undertake a risk assessment for **every** excursion prior to requesting parents' permission. Risk assessments **must** consider any water hazards.

A risk assessment must also be completed for any water experience undertaken within the educational service. If the Nominated Supervisor's approval has been obtained and an experience is deemed safe to proceed, all educators must ensure that supervision is a priority at **all** times throughout the experience, and this policy is adhered.

The following procedures must be followed for **all** activities or excursions that involve water:

- The Nominated Supervisor must be consulted throughout any risk assessment process to provide advice and final approval of **any** excursion or activity involving water.
- If any doubt is held by any Educator, consultation with fellow Educators and the Nominated Supervisor must occur before proceeding with any water play experience.
- Situations involving water should be assessed as having a higher risk of injury and appropriate safeguards planned and implemented. For example, all containers are to be emptied and stored upside down out of children's reach.
- Any water play experiences must be fully supervised at **all** times.
- Educators must be aware that children of any age are at risk of drowning from baths, wading pools, toilets and troughs.

Educators must remain diligent at all times when completing playground and room safety checks to ensure that water and other risks are not left unnoticed. If any risks are noticed, they must be eliminated and/or reported immediately so appropriate management processes and procedures can be implemented.

RELATED POLICES

- Safe Environment Policy
- Excursion Policy

SOURCES

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: section 167
- Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011: regulation 100 to 102, 168
- Guide to the National Law & National Regulations
- Kidsafensw.org.au

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