

# HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

(Health, hygiene and infection control)

Early Childhood Services can be a high-risk environment for incidents and accidents to children, families, Educators, and visitors. Our Service is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment through comprehensive policies and procedures and managing risks and hazards appropriately and effectively.

## NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child’s wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s needs for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.1.3	Healthy Lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
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.
2.2.3	Child Protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
73	Educational programs
74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program
75	Information about the educational program to be kept available

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76	Information about educational program to be given to parents
80	Weekly menu
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
102	Authorisation for excursions
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
104	Fencing
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
107	Space requirements- indoor space
108	Space requirements—outdoor space
109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
110	Ventilation and natural light
111	Administrative space (centre-based services)
112	Nappy change facilities
113	Outdoor space—natural environment
114	Outdoor space—shade
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
158	Children’s attendance records to be kept by approved provider
168	Policies and procedures are required in relation to enrolment and orientation
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

**RELATED POLICIES**

Administration of Medication Policy Child Protection Policy Control of Infectious Diseases Policy Emergency Evacuation Policy Governance Policy Hand Washing Procedure	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Nappy change procedure Physical Environment Policy Safe Storage of Hazardous Chemicals Policy Safe Transportation Policy Sleep and Rest Policy
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Immunisation Policy Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy	Sick Children Policy Sun Safety Policy Work Health and Safety Policy
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## PURPOSE

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* requires approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children, staff and families. We aim to protect the health, safety and welfare of children, educators, families, and visitors of the Service by complying with current health and safety laws and legislation as outlined in this policy.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, the approved provider, nominated supervisor, students and visitors of the Service.

## IMPLEMENTATION

New work health and safety (WHS) laws have commenced in the following States and Territories, using consistent WHS legislation instead of previous OH&S laws:

- South Australia

The National Quality Framework establishes the standards and learning frameworks to provide high quality inclusive education and care in early and middle childhood settings, which can only occur in a safe and healthy work environment. The NQF makes few references to work, health and safety legislation as it underpins this framework. *“Quality Area 2... reinforces children’s right to experience quality education and care in an environment that provides for their health and safety.”* p: 138, 2020.

Thorough work health and safety policies, procedures and practices ensure that:

- management fulfils its responsibility to provide a safe workplace, without any negative impact on the health and wellbeing of employees;
- employees meet their health and safety obligations and are safe in the workplace; and
- the work environment supports quality early education and care.

We are dedicated to ensuring that all health and safety needs are met through the implementation of a high standard of hygiene practices to control the spread of infectious diseases, the prevention and management of injuries and illness, and to provide a safe and secure physical environment for children.

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In any occurrences where children show any signs of illness, accident, injury or trauma, educators will refer to the *Illness Policy* and *Accident, emergency, first aid and fire policy*.

The importance of children’s nutritional and physical health needs will be promoted by educating children about a healthy lifestyle which will be reinforced through the everyday routine and experiences. Information on health, hygiene, safe food, and dental care principles and practices will be displayed at the Service in the front foyer to provide families with further information.

We believe in quality education and care in an environment that provides for all children’s protection through adequate supervision, safe experiences and environments, and vigilance to potential risks. Educators at the Service are dedicated to understanding their legal and ethical responsibility to protect the children enrolled at the Service. Our *Work Health and Safety Policy* provides further detail about Hazard Reduction and Risk Minimisation.

### Choosing Appropriate Resources and Equipment

- The Approved Provider will be ultimately responsible for any purchases of equipment.
- Educators will document any equipment that needs maintenance on a prioritised basis in the **maintenance register located in the office on the white board**.
- Resources and equipment will be chosen to reflect the cultural diversity of the Service’s community and the cultural diversity of contemporary Australia.
- All new equipment will be checked against Australian Safety Standards.
- Equipment that should only be used under supervision will be stored in a safe place out of children’s reach.
- The use of pools and toys or equipment which involves the use of water will be used under the direct supervision of educators. All equipment will be emptied of water when not in use and stored in such a manner that it cannot collect water.
- Equipment will be checked regularly by the educators to ensure it is in a clean and safe condition which will be recorded on the appropriate **indoor and outdoor safety checklist**.
- The Approved Provider will advise educators and parents about the purchase of new equipment and ensure a **risk assessment** has been conducted.

### ON-GOING MAINTENANCE

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- The Service will reflect on the environment and establish a plan ensuring that the environment continuously complies with our philosophy of providing a safe and secure environment, that is stimulating and engaging for all who interact with it.
- The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will also ensure that the Service and its grounds comply with Local Government regulations, and regulations regarding fire protection, ventilation, natural and artificial lighting and safety glass.
- Should the Service undertake major renovations, management plans will be put in place to ensure that the safety of educators, children, families, and others at the Service is not compromised.

### SAFETY CHECKS

A daily inspection of the premises will be undertaken which will include the:

- Service perimeters \* Fences/Fence Line \* Gates \* paths
- Buildings \* All rooms accessible by children \* Fixed equipment
- Sand Pit/Mud pit

This must be done in order to identify any dangerous objects in the grounds ranging from sharps to poisonous or dangerous plants and animals. To ensure best practice, the daily safety checks will be conducted prior to the children go outside at the Service.

Care to be taken and appropriate PPE if any inap

Similarly, trees in the grounds must be checked regularly for overhanging, dead or dangerous looking branches as well as checked for any infestations or nests.

Non-fixed play equipment in the Service grounds can be no more than 1500mm high and must be supervised at all times by an educator. (AS 4685)

The morning,

.oIndoor and Outdoor Daily Safety Checklists will be used as the procedure to conduct these safety checks. A record of these will be kept by the Service. Any required maintenance will immediately be reported to the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor who will make the appropriate arrangements to have repairs carried out.

### CLEANING OF BUILDINGS, PREMISES, FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

#### GENERAL CLEANING

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- The Service will use structured **cleaning schedules** to ensure that all cleaning is carried out regularly and thoroughly.
- To minimise our staff and children’s exposure to infectious diseases or viruses such as coronavirus (COVID-19) our Service will adhere to all recommended guidelines from the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).
- High touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily
- Contract cleaners employed by the Service, will clean at the end of each day.
- Accidents and spills will be cleaned up as quickly as possible to ensure that the Service always maintains a high level of cleanliness, hygiene, and safety.

### HAND WASHING

Effective handwashing is a vital strategy in the prevention of spreading many infectious diseases. Our Service will ensure [signs and posters](#) remind employees and visitors of the importance of handwashing to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. All adults and children should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water and/or alcohol-based sanitiser:

- upon arrival at the Service
- when hands are visibly dirty
- when coming inside from being outside
- before eating
- before putting on disposable gloves
- before preparing food items
- after touching raw meats such as chicken or beef
- before and after toileting children and coming into contact with any body fluids such as blood, urine or vomit
- before and after wearing gloves to change infant nappies
- after touching animals
- after blowing your nose or sneezing and after assisting a child to blow their nose
- after meals
- after going to the toilet
- before and after administering first aid
- before and after administering medication
- before and after preparing children’s bottles
- after removing protective gloves

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- after using any chemical or cleaning fluid

## HYGIENE

The service has access to laundry facilities that are adequate and appropriate for the needs of the service, and are located and maintained in a way that prevents unsupervised access by children. It is not recommended that educators/staff take centre laundry home to wash. Soiled laundry will be hygienically stored in a sealed container in an area inaccessible to children, until such a time as it is laundered or removed from the premises. Items returned to a child’s home for laundering will have soiling removed and will be placed in a leak proof container and not placed in the child’s bag in contact with personal items. It is not recommended that educators/staff rinse soiled clothes due to risk of contaminating their clothing which can then be a source for transporting germs.

Educators will wear gloves when handling soiled linen and will follow recommended procedures for washing soiled linen. Refer to staying healthy in child care. Educators/staff will use separate cloths or tissues to wipe different children's faces and noses. Tissues will be disposed of immediately after wiping a child's nose. Hand hygiene will be performed between each child after wiping noses and disposing of tissues. Educators/staff will use paper towel to wipe surfaces or blue wash clothes that will be disposed of immediately after use. The service will use detergent and warm water to clean except where the public health authority recommends a particular disinfectant for an outbreak of an infectious disease. Each child will have their own bedding which will be washed at least once a week or after soiling. Educators will follow recommended procedures for dealing with a child’s soiled bedding.

## NAPPY CHANGE AREA AND TOILETING

Nappy changing will be done only in the nappy change area. Nappy change areas must be cleaned after each use with Neutral Detergent sanitiser (orange bottle) and dried with paper towel. Placing paper towel on the change mat and removing this after each nappy change is recommended. Nappy change mats should be changed over twice a day. The procedure for Nappy changing will be displayed in the nappy change area. Glenelg Community Child Care Centre asks that parent / guardians provide nappies for their baby or child. The centre will keep some spare nappies for times that babies or children have not enough nappies. In the instance that spare nappies are used regularly they will be charged to the parent / guardian account at a cost of \$2 per nappy.

Educators will discuss signs of toileting readiness with parents and work with families to develop a consistent approach to toilet training. Educators will not begin toilet training of a child until there are definite indications that the child is developmentally and emotionally ready.

The service will ask families whose children are toilet training to supply several changes of clothing. Educators will follow recommended procedures for assisting children during toilet training and dealing with children’s soiled clothes. Educators will always encourage children’s efforts to develop independence.

Nappy changing and toileting is flexible and responsive to children’s individual needs. Educators may recommend a variety of methods to parents who have requested assistance in self toileting. Educators will interact with children in a relaxed and positive way during nappy changing and toileting as this is an excellent time to continue verbal interactions with children especially as it

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is a one to one time. Children will be supervised and encouraged to flush toilets and wash and dry their hands after use. Incontinent children will never be embarrassed by educators/staff in regard to toileting habits. Educators will discourage any negatives from families within a child’s hearing.

### ARRANGEMENTS FOR LAUNDERING OF SOILED ITEMS

Soiled clothing will be returned to a child’s home for laundering. Educators will remove soiled content prior to placing clothing into a plastic bag and securely storing these items in a sealed container not placed in the child’s bag. Sealed buckets are located in the babies toilet area and the Toddler trough.

### IMMUNISATION AGAINST INFECTIOUS DISEASES

To attend childcare children must be fully immunised, or on an approved vaccination catch-up schedule, or have a medical reason not to be vaccinated. An immunisation history statement must be used as proof that a child's immunisation schedule is up-to-date or not-up-to-date. This can be an official record issued by the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) or a letter from a recognised immunisation provider (eg GP or immunisation nurse). Children who are not immunised, do not have a complete immunisation record, are immunosuppressed or are who are receiving medical treatment causing immunosuppression such as chemotherapy will be excluded from care during outbreaks of some infectious diseases in accordance with the National Health & Medical Research Council exclusion guidelines, even if their child is well.

The service will keep a stock of up to date information/ pamphlets for parents and educators/staff on immunisation and common infectious diseases and will contact their public health unit if they have any questions regarding infectious diseases.

All workers at the education care service will be encouraged to have all immunisations recommended in the service’s Staff Immunisation Policy.

Exclusion due to infectious diseases please to refer to our illness policy. We follow the guidelines within Staying health in child care 4<sup>th</sup> addition. <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/staying-healthy-preventing-infectious-diseases-early-childhood-education-and-care-services>

### CLEANING UP SPILLS OF BLOOD AND OTHER BODY FLUIDS

The best way to prevent infection is to follow standard precautions at all times. Standard precautions support the assumption that all blood and body fluids are potentially infectious, therefore hygiene practices that promote infection control are adopted for all contact with blood and body fluids. Educators/staff will follow recommended guidelines for dealing with spills of blood, faeces, vomit, urine, nasal discharge and other body fluids as explained in Staying Healthy in Child Care in order to protect the health and safety of all children and adults within the service. Disposable gloves will be readily available for use in dealing with spills and hands will be washed after removal of gloves.

### HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

All staff will ensure that every effort is made to maintain a high standard of hygiene in the provision of the education and care service including supporting the Nominated Provider in the maintenance of all equipment and furnishings in a thoroughly safe, clean and hygienic condition and in good repair. In this regard staff will report any equipment and/or area that is not clean or in a safe condition or any evidence of vermin to the health and Safety representative/officer. The service is a non-smoking environment. Passive smoking harms the lungs of young children and may trigger an asthma attack. Refer to Workplace Health and Safety policy. To ensure all children and educators attending the service are protected from skin damage caused by harmful ultra violet rays of the sun, educators will consistently follow the service’s Sun Protection policy. The service’s Sun Protection policy is provided to families both within the Parent/Guardian Handbook and on a printed handout which is available on request. All rooms used

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within the education and care service will be well ventilated to prevent: reduced concentration span; lack of energy, tiredness and lethargy; increased risk of infection and possible asthma attacks. All windows and doors will be flyscreened, or buildings will be protected against flying insects. The educator will ensure that lighting, heating and noise levels are comfortable and take into account specific activities (e.g. sleep time) and individual needs.

All staff will ensure that every effort is made to maintain a high standard of hygiene in the provision of the education and care service including supporting the Nominated Provider in the maintenance of all equipment and furnishings in a thoroughly safe, clean and hygienic condition and in good repair. In this regard staff will report any equipment and/or area that is not clean or in a safe condition or any evidence of vermin to the health and Safety representative/officer. The service is a non-smoking environment. Passive smoking harms the lungs of young children and may trigger an asthma attack. Refer to Workplace Health and Safety policy. To ensure all children and educators attending the service are protected from skin damage caused by harmful ultra violet rays of the sun, educators will consistently follow the service’s Sun Protection policy. The service’s Sun Protection policy is provided to families both within the Parent/Guardian Handbook and on a printed handout which is available on request. All rooms used within the education and care service will be well ventilated to prevent: reduced concentration span; lack of energy, tiredness and lethargy; increased risk of infection and possible asthma attacks. All windows and doors will be flyscreened, or buildings will be protected against flying insects. The educator will ensure that lighting, heating and noise levels are comfortable and take into account specific activities (e.g. sleep time) and individual needs.

### TOY CLEANING

Educators are required to clean the children’s equipment and toys on a regular basis, and on a daily basis in rooms with younger children, in order to minimise cross contamination and the spread of illnesses. Educators will wash a toy immediately if it has been sneezed on, mouthed, and/or soiled or if it has been discarded after play by a child who has been unwell. The Service will have washable toys for younger children. Toys and equipment must be cleaned more often in the event of an infectious disease or virus is present in the service or community- (COVID-19). Refer to the following toy cleaning schedule for toys on display in the children’s rooms. Educators will be required to keep a toy cleaning register, documenting when toys and equipment have been cleaned.

### RECOMMENDED CLEANING MATERIALS

- Most toys can be washed with normal dishwashing liquid and rinsed with clean water.
- Get into corners with a toothbrush and allow to air dry (if possible, in the natural sunlight).
- Leaving items such as LEGO and construction blocks to drain on a clean towel overnight is ideal.
- Woodern toys should be wiped over with a damp cloth – please do not immerse in water as this can destroy the equipment.

### KITCHENS

- Children must not gain access to any harmful substance, equipment or amenity.
- The kitchen has a barrier to prevent unsupervised entry by children into the kitchen.
- The preparation of bottles for children under the age of 2 years is both safe and hygienic at all times and separate from nappy change area.
- Children should not be permitted in the kitchen at any time

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## MONITOR AND REVIEW HAZARDS

Risk management is an ongoing process. Risks must be systematically monitored, and management strategies reviewed to ensure that they continue to be effective and contribute to a safe and healthy work environment. New hazards can emerge over time resulting in control strategies becoming ineffective and therefore may require updating.

Hazard identification, Risk Management and Hazard Reduction is specifically addressed within our *Work Health and Safety Policy*.

## BACK CARE AND MANUAL HANDLING

- Manual handling is any activity requiring the use of strength used by the person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person or object.
- Manual handling injuries may be caused by the activities listed above. Injuries can include back strains, similar strains and sprains in parts of the body such as the neck, arm, shoulder and knee.
- Manual handling injuries also include overuse injuries or, because of falling during manual handling, bruising or laceration.

(See our *Work Health and Safety Policy* for further information and recommendations for back care and manual handling).

## FURTHER RESOURCES

South Australia: SafeWork SA provides work health and safety services across South Australia

<https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/>

For further information see: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/>

[Australian Government Department of Health Australian Health Protection Principal Committee \(AHPPC\) Children in early childhood and learning centres](#)

## Source

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*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

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