

# PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (WORKPLACE SAFETY, LEARNING AND ADMINISTRATION) POLICY

## Document History:

VERSION NUMBER:	DATE ISSUED:	REVISION SUMMARY / REASON FOR ISSUE:
20160331	31/03/2016	Document rewritten. Format amended and revision history incorporated.
20170331		Annual review – no changes – not reissued.
20170515	15/05/2017	Name changed from “Physical Environment (WHS, Learning and Administration) Policy. References deleted for items now in other policies. Maintenance Checklists Logs references added.

# PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (WORKPLACE SAFETY, LEARNING AND ADMINISTRATION) POLICY

## NQS

QA2	2.3.2	Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.
QA3	3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose
	3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained
	3.1.3	Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service and to allow flexible use, and interaction between indoor and outdoor space.
	3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organised to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
	3.2.2	Resources, materials and equipment are sufficient in number, organised in ways that ensure appropriate and effective implementation of the program and allow for multiple uses
QA6	6.1.2	Families have opportunities to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions
	6.1.3	Current information about the service is available to families
	6.2.1	The expertise of families is recognised and they share in decision making about their child's learning and wellbeing

## National Regulations

Regs	82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol free environment
	103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
	104	Fencing and security
	105	Furniture, materials and equipment
	106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
	107	Space requirements—indoor
	108	Space requirements—outdoor space
	109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
	110	Ventilation and natural light
	111	Administrative space
	112	Nappy change facilities
	113	Outdoor space—natural environment
	114	Outdoor space—shade
	115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
	156	Relationships in groups
	249	Declared approved services (other than declared approved family day care services)
	251	Declared out of scope services

## EYLF

L02	Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.
	Children respond to diversity with respect
	Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

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L04	Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
	Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, enquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
	Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
	Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

### Aim

To provide a physical environment that is safe, appealing, constructive, well-maintained and welcoming to all individuals who use it.

### Related Policies

- Additional Needs Policy
- Animal and Pet Policy
- Chemical Spills
- Emergency Management and Evacuation
- Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Relationships with Children Policy
- Sandpit Policy
- Sleep, Rest, Relaxation and Clothing Policy
- Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy

### Related Forms and Documents

- Safety Checklist
- Open Procedures
- Close Procedures
- Weekly Cleaning Checklist Kit-Bath-Laund
- Weekly Cleaning Checklist Nur-Tod
- Maintenance Checklist – General
- Maintenance Checklist – Week-Month
- Maintenance Checklist – Qtr-Year
- Sunscreen Register
- Safety Switch Test Record
- Visitors Register
- Risk Assessment Action Plan
- Playground Supervision Plan
- Manual Lifting (Training Tool)

### Who is affected by this policy?

Children  
Families  
Educators  
Management

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## Implementation

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will provide a stimulating environment that continually engages children and fosters their learning and development while ensuring their safety and that of educators, families and visitors.

### Resources and Equipment:

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- provide appropriately sized furniture and equipment in the indoor and outdoor settings for the age ranges at the service
- provide sufficient furniture, resources, materials, toys and equipment for the number of children and ensure they are developmentally appropriate
- check that all equipment, including resources, car seats, booster seats etc meets Australian Standards and educators are trained in correct maintenance and assembly
- ensure non-fixed play equipment in the grounds is less than one metre high and that educators can adequately supervise children at all times
- place any outdoor climbing equipment, swings or slides on impact absorbing surfaces (soft fall materials)
- maintain an up to date inventory/registry of equipment
- select resources and equipment that reflect the cultural diversity of our families, local community and nation, including Australia's Indigenous community
- actively seek the views of parents and families about our resources and equipment
- advise educators and families about the purchase of new equipment and ensure a risk assessment is carried out
- prepare an ongoing prioritised maintenance plan for the service at the beginning of each year, and implement the plan throughout the year, and organise maintenance systems (e.g. checklists, logs, building and equipment records).

Educators will:

- record equipment or resources which require maintenance in the Maintenance Checklist Logs and notify the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor.
- record when recurrent maintenance is carried out in the Maintenance Checklist Logs
- introduce children to new resources and equipment, and teach them how to use and care for them appropriately
- store equipment that should only be used under supervision in a secure place
- allow children to use a trampoline only when they are directly supervised
- regularly check equipment and resources to ensure it is clean and safe
- ensure they comply with cleaning schedules for resources and equipment

### Facilities:

The Approved Provider will:

- provide adequate, sufficient and accessible facilities for hand-washing, toileting, eating and sleeping. Toileting and hand-washing facilities will be accessible from our indoor and outdoor environments
- provide adequate, sufficient and hygienic facilities for nappy changing which are inaccessible to children if they are not directly supervised, and providing at least 1 properly constructed nappy changing bench for children under 3 years of age
- provide access to clean drinking water in our indoor and outdoor environments
- providing secure and hygienic laundry facilities
- provide a separate outdoor space for children under 2 years of age
- ensure that the premises and grounds comply with building regulations (Local, State and Federal Government) and the Building Code of Australia in relation to fire, ventilation, lighting and safety glass

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- provide appropriate and hygienic areas for food preparation
- complete a Building Safety check of the premises and grounds every 6 months and ensure any work necessary meets Australian standards
- implement management plans to ensure the safety of educators, children, families and visitors if the service undertakes major renovations
- ensure there are at least 3.25 square metres of unencumbered indoor space for each child at the service (does not include passageways, bathrooms, food preparation areas, staff or administrative rooms, storage areas, kitchens unless primarily used by children as part of the program and any space not suitable for children)
- ensure there are at least 7 square metres of unencumbered outdoor space for each child at the service (does not include areas like thoroughfares, car parks and storage sheds)
- Indoor and outdoor space requirements do not apply to children being educated and cared for in:
  - an emergency for no more than two consecutive days the Service operates, or
  - exceptional circumstances where all the children are siblings in the same family, or the child is in need of protection under a child protection order.

### **Environment:**

The Approved Provider will:

- include natural elements like plants, trees, gardens, rock, mud and water
- provide adequate shading
- adequately fence the environment.
- incorporate natural and artificial lighting, appropriate ventilation, heating, cooling and fresh air
- include elements that challenge children and encourage appropriate risk taking for the child's developmental level
- incorporate specific requirements for special needs children as seamlessly as possible
- incorporate sustainable practices which develop environmental responsibility
- ensure elements in the environment encourage children to explore, solve problems, create, construct and engage in critical thinking

### **Layout:**

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- organise the environment so children, educators and visitors can move around without disrupting children's activities
- create spaces which encourage collaborative learning through group interactions and one-on-one interactions
- create areas where children can engage in quiet, restful or independent activities
- establish the environment so children can be adequately supervised at all times
- provide space for administrative functions, consultation with children's parents and private conversations
- keep plans about the arrangement of the rooms and outdoor spaces to show how our service creates inviting learning spaces, and document how the arrangement, resources and equipment contribute to children's learning.
- keep a record of any changes made to the physical environment e.g. re-arrangement of rooms, additions/changes to outdoor environment

### **Activities:**

The Nominated Supervisor and educators will:

- undertake regular risk assessments to ensure risk is minimised or eliminated at all times
- provide adequate and ongoing training in risk management practices for new and existing educators, staff and volunteers

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- engage children in a wide variety of indoor and outdoor experiences
- discuss safety issues with children (e.g. using toys or equipment) and involving children in rule setting to minimise or eliminate safety risks.
- cover unused power points with safety caps, securing all electrical cords and ensuring all double adaptors and power-boards are inaccessible to children
- provide families with the latest child-related safety information

### **Children's Groupings:**

It is important that children have opportunities to interact with other children and educators in group situations. This contributes to their learning and development and helps children to develop respectful and positive relationships. When forming groups, the Nominated Supervisor and educators will consider whether the size and composition of the group is appropriate by considering whether children:

- are settled
- develop secure relationships with educators and positive relationships with peers.

The Nominated Supervisor and educators will:

- base children's rooms and groupings on their age and/or development
- have open play time in the morning so all children can interact with children and educators from other rooms.

### **Safety Check**

To ensure the safety of all children and educators, the Nominated Supervisor will ensure the following safety checks are carried out:

- a daily inspection of the premises before children arrive (use the Indoor and Outdoor Daily Safety Checklists referenced in this policy) to ensure the service is safe, secure and hygienic, and there are no dangerous objects on the premises or service grounds, for example sharps or poisonous flora and fauna, including a check of:
  - perimeters
  - fences
  - gates
  - paths
  - buildings
  - all rooms accessible to children
  - fixed equipment

Educators will wear gloves and use tongs to pick up any sharp objects (e.g. syringes) and place them in the 'sharp object box'.

- regular inspections of trees in the service grounds for overhanging, dead or dangerous looking branches as well as for any infestations or nests.
- regular pest inspections by an accredited pest control company. Any recommendations made by the company will be implemented if they will not compromise the health and safety of children and adults.

The Nominated Supervisor will keep records of pest inspections and findings, and records to verify completion of safety checks.

### **Cleaning of Buildings, Premises, Furniture and Equipment**

To ensure that cleaning is carried out regularly and thoroughly and the environment, resources and equipment are hygienic, the Nominated Supervisor will ensure educators and other staff:

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- implement structured cleaning schedules (as referenced in this policy) to ensure that all cleaning is carried out regularly and thoroughly so that the service environment, resources and equipment are hygienic.
- use the least dangerous cleaning substance possible
- use colour-coded sponges (e.g. pink for the kitchen, yellow for the bathroom) to eliminate cross-contamination of different areas
- use disposable gloves
- wash and dry hands after cleaning before returning to the children
- clean and dry cleaning equipment between uses so germs can't multiply on the equipment.
- store cleaning equipment securely
- wash dress-up and play clothes once a week in hot water and detergent
- clean the service at the end of each day and throughout the day as the need arises
- clean up accidents and spills as quickly as possible.

### **Use of Detergents:**

Ordinary detergents will be used to help remove dirt from surfaces. Proper cleaning with detergent and warm water, followed by rinsing then drying and airing time kills most germs as they are unable to multiply in a clean environment.

### **Use of Disinfectants:**

Disinfectants are usually unnecessary as very few germs can survive exposure to fresh air and natural light. In an outbreak situation, public health units may specify the use of a particular disinfectant.

Essentially, there is no ideal disinfectant. Disinfectants cannot kill germs if the surface is not clean. For disinfectants to work effectively, there still needs to be thorough cleaning using a detergent beforehand. However, it is more important to make sure surfaces have been cleaned with detergent and warm water than to use a disinfectant. To kill germs, any disinfectant needs:

- to be of the right concentrate
- a clean surface to be able to get to the germ
- enough time to kill the germs - at least 10 minutes.

Even when all of these conditions are met a disinfectant will not kill all the germs present.

### **Clothing:**

Educators will:

- wash their clothing daily
- wear protective garments (e.g. aprons) to cover clothing that cannot be washed frequently
- have a change of clothes available in case of accidents.

### **Toys:**

To avoid the spread of disease, the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- only buy washable toys
- discard non-washable toys that are for general use (non-washable toys may be used for one child only)

To avoid the spread of disease, educators will:

- wash toys at the end of each day, especially in younger children's rooms
- immediately remove a toy that has been sneezed on, mouthed, soiled or discarded after play by a child who has been unwell, so it can be washed at the end of the day
- wash toys in warm water and detergent (many can be washed in a dishwasher but not at the same time as dishes) and rinse in clean water
- use a toothbrush or other tool to clean difficult to reach areas e.g. corners

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- take care cleaning toys that cannot be immersed in water e.g. wooden toys, rattles, toys with paper and cardboard and books, and wipe with a damp cloth and detergent
- thoroughly dry toys and books before returning to use. All, toys, including cloth toys and books can be dried by sunlight. Items like LEGO and construction blocks can also be left to drain on a clean tea-towel overnight
- regularly clean ride-on vehicles and outdoor toys and protect from the weather to preserve their lifespan.

### **Play Dough:**

To reduce the risk of spreading infections, educators will:

- get children to wash their hands with soap and water before and after using play dough
- store play dough in an airtight container in the refrigerator
- make a new batch of play dough each week
- discard play dough at the end of each day if there is an outbreak of vomiting and/or diarrhoea.

### **Packing Toys Away**

Educators will:

- pack small pieces in bags provided and replace bags which may be deteriorating
- use elastic bands to contain similar items (like railway tracks)
- complete puzzles before packing away if possible

## **Hazardous Substances**

When **purchasing** dangerous chemicals, substances, medicines or equipment, the Approved Provider will:

- select and use the least hazardous substance or equipment
- only select substances which have child resistant lids or caps
- ensure dangerous substances/chemicals are supplied with a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) formerly called a Material Data Safety Sheet
- ensure educators adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for use, storage, and first aid recorded on the SDS
- keep a register of all hazardous chemicals, substances and equipment used at the Service. Information recorded will include where they are stored, their use, any risks, and first aid instructions and the current SDS. The register will be readily accessible.

When **using** dangerous chemicals, substances, medicines or equipment, educators will:

- use dispensing bottles or containers which have been clearly labelled
- ensure the child resistant lids or caps are properly closed after use
- adhere at all times to manufacturer's advice and instructions (e.g. follow advice for products which need to be stored in a refrigerated environment)
- wear appropriate personal protective clothing recommended on the manufacturer's instructions.

When **storing** dangerous chemicals, substances, medicines or equipment, educators will:

- store all dangerous substances in their original containers
- keep all labels and/or use by dates intact at all times
- dispose of (without using) any dangerous substance not stored in the original container, or with destroyed labels and/or unknown use by dates. Disposal will be safe and in line with local council guidelines. Containers will not be reused under any circumstances



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- lock all dangerous substances and equipment, including cleaning materials, detergents, toiletries poisons, dangerous tools and equipment with sharp and razor edges, in a place or facility which is labelled, secure and inaccessible to children.
- lock particularly dangerous and hazardous materials such as pesticides, herbicides, petroleum, kerosene, solvents and equipment which is operated by an engine or hazardous to children, in a locked facility external to the main building of the service, and separate from children's play or outdoor environments. The facility must have a bonded floor, be inaccessible to children and be clearly labelled as storing dangerous substances and/or equipment
- store any dangerous substances that need to be refrigerated in a labelled, child resistant container, preferably in a separate compartment or in a part of the refrigerator inaccessible to children
- wear appropriate personal protective clothing recommended on the manufacturer's instructions.

### **First Aid:**

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- seek medical advice immediately if poisoning or potentially hazardous ingestion, inhalation, skin or eye exposure has occurred by calling the Poisons Information Line on 131126 or Ambulance service on 000
- immediately ring the emergency services on 000 if there is any major emergency involving a hazardous chemical or equipment, a gas, fire or explosion hazard
- implement the first aid procedures in the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy, and if required the emergency procedures in the Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy, if a child or any other person is injured by a chemical, substance or equipment.

### **Other requirements:**

The Approved Provider will:

- notify the appropriate Workplace Health and Safety Authority if there is any major emergency involving a hazardous chemical or equipment, a gas, fire or explosion hazard or a child or any other person is seriously injured by a chemical, substance or equipment (refer Work Health and Safety Policy).
- regularly implement the Poison Safety Checklist attached to this policy to ensure we protect the health and safety of all children and adults at the service.

## **Kitchens**

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- children cannot gain access to any harmful substance, equipment or facility
- a door, half-gate or other barrier prevents unsupervised entry by children into the kitchen
- the preparation of children's bottles is both safe and hygienic at all times and separate from nappy change area.

## **Laundry**

- The laundry area includes a washing machine and flushing rim sink with hot & cold water supply for the laundering of the centre's soiled linen and spare common clothes.
- Soiled clothes and linen belonging to children are to be laundered away from the premises by the child's carers; soiled laundry is hygienically stored in a sealed container until it is removed from the premises. Items returned to a child's home for laundering will have soiling removed, will be stored securely in the room soiled clothes collection bins and will not be placed in a child's bag in contact with personal items. Educators will advise families that there are soiled clothes to be collected from the soiled clothes collection bins.

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## **Sun Protection**

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and staff understand that Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Childhood sun exposure is an important contributing factor to lifetime skin cancer risk. The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and staff will protect the health and wellbeing of all children by:

- implementing the following SunSmart measures recommended by Cancer Council Queensland
- using multiple sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels are forecast to reach 3 and above utilising information from the Bureau of Meteorology website <http://www.bom.gov.au/qld/uv/index.shtml> which has UV forecasts for all areas of Queensland with information about UV levels during the day.
- ensuring sun protection measures are considered when planning excursions.

### **Outdoor Activities:**

Educators and staff will, where possible, plan outdoor activities outside of peak UV times. Outdoor activities will be avoided around the midday hours when UV levels are highest. Sun protection is required at all times children are outside.

### **Shade:**

All outdoor activities will be planned in shaded areas. Play activities will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.

The service will provide and maintain adequate shade for outdoor play. Shade options can include a combination of portable, natural and built shade. Regular shade assessments should be conducted to monitor existing shade structures and assist in planning for additional shade.

### **Hats:**

Educators, staff and children are required to wear sun safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears. A sun safe hat is a:

- legionnaire hat
- bucket hat with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm)
- broad brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm).

**Note: Baseball caps or visors are not sun safe because they do not provide enough sun protection.**

Children without a sun safe hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, veranda or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat.

### **Clothing:**

When outdoors, educators, staff and children will wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible. This includes wearing:

- loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline.
- longer style skirts, shorts and trousers.

Children who are not wearing sun safe clothing can be provided with spare clothing.

**Note: Midriff, crop or singlet tops and cap sleeves are not sun safe because they do not provide enough sun protection.**

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### **Sunglasses:**

Children, staff and educators are encouraged to wear close fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

### **Sunscreen:**

All educators, staff and children will apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours. Sunscreen is stored in a cool, dry place and the use-by-date monitored. Authorisation to apply sunscreen will be obtained from parents. Children and babies may not be able to play outside if we are not authorised to apply sunscreen.

### **Babies (under 12 months):**

Babies will not be exposed to direct sunlight and are to remain in full shade when outside. They will wear sun safe hats and clothing and small amounts of SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen may be applied to their exposed skin if authorised by parents when direct exposure is unavoidable.

### **Role Modelling**

Educators and staff will act as role models and demonstrate sun safe behaviour by:

- wearing a sun safe hat (see Hats)
- wearing sun safe clothing (see Clothing)
- applying SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplying every 2 hours
- using and promoting shade
- wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067.

Families and visitors are encouraged to role model positive sun safe behaviour.

### **Education and Information:**

Sun protection will be incorporated regularly into learning programs. Sun protection information will be promoted to educators, families and visitors. Further information is available from the Cancer Council website [www.cancerqld.org.au](http://www.cancerqld.org.au).

### **Policy Availability:**

The sun protection policy, updates and requirements (including hat, clothing and sunscreen) will be made available to educators and staff, families and visitors in our Parent Handbook and through other Service communications.

### **Review:**

The Nominated Supervisor will monitor and review the effectiveness of our sun protection policy regularly, at least once every 12 months, and as part of our SunSmart Agreement with Cancer Council Qld submit the policy to the Cancer Council Qld for review every two years.

## **Extreme Heat**

Extreme heat is usually defined as a period of abnormally and uncomfortably hot weather that could adversely affect people's health. Babies and young children are especially vulnerable to extreme heat. To protect the health of our children and educators/staff during periods of extreme heat educators will:

- Regularly offer children water to drink
- Regularly ask children if they would like to cool their faces with wet washers or by splashing water on their faces in the bathroom sink

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- Regularly sponge the faces of babies using cool, wet washers
- Ensure children are dressed in cool clothing e.g. singlets, short sleeves
- Keep children indoors in a cool, comfortable environment with air conditioning or fans
- Organise water play activities inside
- Use curtains to block the sun where available, particularly on sides of the service facing the sun
- Cancel or postpone excursions and outdoor activities
- Check the storage instructions for medications and take appropriate action e.g. move medication to fridge or request new medication supply if extreme temperature likely to damage medication
- Listen for bushfire messages if in a bushfire risk area
- Ensure children, including siblings of children at the service, are never left in parked cars.

When the period of extreme heat has subsided educators will:

- Open the windows if there is a cool breeze
- Allow children outside following our sun safety procedures

If there is a complete loss of power during a heatwave, educators will implement service procedures for emergency power (see Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy) including the use of battery operated fans to cool children. Families will be contacted to collect children if educators believe children's health is at risk from the heat.

### **Water Safety**

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators understand the risks that water based activities pose and will undertake measures to protect the health and safety of all children involved in water based activities.

Educators will:

- complete a risk assessment before allowing children to engage in water based activities at the service or on excursion and ensure all risks are minimised or eliminated where possible.
- ensure no child swims in any water without:
  - written permission from parents.
  - appropriate educator/child ratios in place and adequate supervision.
- closely supervise children at all times and never leave any child unattended near water.
- ensure children with diarrhoea, upset stomachs, open sores or nasal infections do not swim or play in water.
- ensure all children wear appropriate swimmers in a pool, go to the toilet before entering the pool, and follow correct toileting hygiene practices while in the pool.
- remove all children immediately if a child passes a bowel motion in the pool, advise pool managers if at a public pool, disinfect and if practical empty a home pool or trough.

To prevent accidents and illnesses related to water based activities at the service educators will:

- fill uncertified wading pools with less than 300 mm of water. (Under the State Building Act 1975, pools that hold more than 300 mm of water, or hold more than 2000 litres, or have a filtration system must obtain a certificate from a licensed building certifier stating that the pool complies with the pool safety standard before the pool is filled with more than 300 mm of water. These pools must also have building approval and be registered.)
- cover all water containers like ponds, spas, nappy buckets, bathtubs or ensure they are inaccessible to children
- immediately empty all wading pools/water troughs etc. after every use and store in a way that prevents water collecting in them (e.g. upright/inverted).

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- ensure children's play areas are safely fenced off from water hazards like rivers, dams, creeks, lakes, irrigation channels, wells.
- check grounds after rain or watering and empty water that has collected in holes or containers.
- ensure all pools and troughs in which children play are hygienically cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the instructions on the container.
- For wading pools and trough educators will:
  - remove leaves and debris daily
  - hose away surface dirt
  - scrub inside with disinfectant and rinse it away before refilling

### **Visitors**

To ensure we can meet Work Health and Safety requirements and ensure the safety of our children, individuals (excluding parents and children's registered carers) visiting our service must sign in when they arrive at the service, and sign out when they leave.

### **Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment**

Services must ensure that electrical equipment is regularly inspected and tested by a competent person if the electrical equipment is supplied with electricity through an electrical socket and used in conditions where it could be damaged, including exposure to moisture, heat, vibration, mechanical damage, corrosive chemicals or dust. A record of the testing, which may be a tag attached to the equipment tested, must be kept until the equipment is next tested or disposed of and must specify:

- the name of the tester
- the date and outcome of the testing
- the date on which the next testing must be carried out.

### **Fire Equipment**

All fire equipment at our service will comply with relevant laws and regulations, council requirements and the Building Code, and be maintained in line with the Australian Standard AS 1851-2012 (see Attachment D).

### **Back Care and Manual Handling**

Manual handling means any activity requiring the use of force exerted by the person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person or object.

Manual handling injuries can be the result of incorrect manual handling techniques, overuse, or from accidents. Injuries include back strains, and sprains in other parts of the body such as the neck, arm, shoulder and knee, bruising and lacerations.

Employers and managers have a legal duty to provide safe workplaces and implement safe workplace practices.

#### **Principles of Preventing Manual Handling Injuries:**

- Eliminate or reduce the amount of manual handling.
- Reduce the amount of bending, forward reaching, and twisting, in all tasks.
- Reduce worker fatigue.
- Keep all equipment in good working order.
- Keep the workplace environment safe.

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The Nominated Supervisor will:

- provide annual training in manual handling and back care
- display written, current information regarding manual handling in the staff room
- ensure equipment and facilities are designed and maintained to reduce manual handling injuries
- ensure work practices are consistent with safe manual handling guidelines
- ensure educators and staff follow our safe manual handling procedures
- identify, assess and control all risks associated with manual handling
- clearly mark any equipment which requires more than one person to lift or move it.

To help prevent manual handling injuries educators and staff will:

- kneel rather than bend down e.g. to help a child put their shoes on
- sit rather than bend e.g. to comfort a child, educators will sit on the floor and encourage the child to sit on their lap
- sit in an appropriate sized chair (or on the floor) so their upper legs are horizontal to hips and feet flat on the floor
- sit in an appropriate sized chair and table to complete writing tasks (e.g. programming)
- carry children with one arm under the child's buttocks and the other arm supporting the child's back, with the child facing them as close as possible to their body
- not carry a child on their hip because this can strain the back, and only carry children when necessary
- lift safely and avoid twisting, especially with awkward loads
- lift a child out of a cot by leaning against the cot and raising the child as close as possible to their body. Educators and staff will not stretch over and lift
- help larger children to climb up steps/ladder provided to change table
- use a step ladder to reach above shoulder level
- avoid extended reaching forward e.g. leaning into low equipment boxes
- share the load if the equipment is heavy, long or awkward
- ask for help and organise a team lift when sliding, pulling or pushing equipment that is not easy to move e.g. trestles or gym mats
- rearrange surroundings to meet the needs of both children and adults where possible
- use equipment and furniture that can be moved around as safely and easily as possible
- store seldom-used objects up high between the shoulder-to-raised arm height
- avoid storing objects between a person's knuckles and the floor
- use mechanical aids like ladders and trolleys where possible to avoid lifting and stretching
- Reduce accidents by implementing good housekeeping practices including ensuring:
  - the floors and other walking surfaces are uncluttered, even and non-slippery
  - the environment is tidy
  - there is adequate space to work
  - equipment is maintained regularly
  - lighting is adequate.

### **How to Lift Safely:**

- Place your feet in astride position
- Keep your breastbone as elevated as possible
- Bend your knees
- Brace your stomach muscles.
- Hold the object close to your centre of gravity i.e. around your navel
- Move your feet not your spine
- Prepare to move in a forward-facing direction
- Ask for help when it is not possible to lift on your own

## **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (WORKPLACE SAFETY, LEARNING AND ADMINISTRATION) POLICY**

### **Avoid Twisting when Lifting:**

To avoid injuries resulting from twisting educators and staff will:

- move equipment when children are not around
- rearrange storage so that it is easier and safer to replace and remove items
- lift only within the limits of their strength
- use beds and equipment that are easy to move
- ensure they can see where they are going when carrying equipment or children
- be especially careful when lifting a child with special needs.

### **Organising a Team Lift:**

Educators and staff will:

- Ask a colleague who is willing and able to help, and ideally is fairly well matched with them in size and strength
- Agree on a plan of action to achieve a coordinated lift
- Appoint one person as team leader to 'call' the lift.

### **How to Assess the Correct Storage and Shelving Height**

Correct storage and shelving height is important to prevent slips, falls and strains. When standing with feet together and hands by sides:

- the best height range for handling loads is around waist level
- the acceptable height for lifting is any point between a person's knuckle and shoulder.

## **Sources**

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011  
Early Years Learning Framework  
Dangerous Substances (National Code of Practice for the Labelling of Workplace Substances) Code of Practice Approval 2006  
National Quality Standard  
Work Health and Safety Act 2011  
Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011
- Staying Healthy –Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services 2012
- Australian Standards 1851-2005 "Maintenance of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment"  
Early Childhood Settings SunSmart Policy Guidelines Cancer Council QLD
- Work Safe Victoria: Children's services – occupational health and safety compliance kit
- State Building Act 1975
- Building Code of Australia
- Royal Life Saving Society Home Pool Safety Checklist
- Royal Life Saving Society Wading Pools Checklist
- Australian Standard 1926.1 Swimming Pool Safety
- Kidsafensw: Playground surfacing
- Heat health plan for Victoria
- Vic Govt Better Health: How to cope and stay safe in extreme heat
- Cancer Council QLD Sample Sun Protection Policy

# **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (WORKPLACE SAFETY, LEARNING AND ADMINISTRATION) POLICY**

## **Review**

The policy will be reviewed annually.

Review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

**Reviewed: 15 May 2017**

**Date for next review: May, 2018**