



Water Safety Policy

Rationale

According to data from the South Australian Health Department for the year 2022-2023, drowning remains a leading cause of casualty among children aged 0-5 years. Last year, there were 17 drowning deaths among children aged 0-4 years; this is a 29% decrease on the last year and a 23% decrease on the 10-year average, an improvement after a rising tragically during covid lockdowns number of drowning incidents involving young children were reported during this period. These alarming statistics highlight the critical need for a comprehensive water safety policy to mitigate such risks. – Royal Life Saving National Drowning Report 2022.

Policy statement

Riverview Preschool is responsible for ensuring every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children, families, staff and visitors from harm and hazards that are likely to impact on their health, safety and wellbeing. This policy applies to all events on and off the site e.g., excursions, local walks etc.

A comprehensive induction process will be undertaken and documented to ensure agreement and adoption of these practices by all staff at this service including the Nominated Supervisor, Responsible Persons, educators, staff, and any volunteers. Children will also undertake an induction process e.g., taught how to successfully manage water safety in their learning.

Background

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for emergency and evacuation to minimise risk of harm to children. Relevant references to the National Quality Framework requirements include:

Regulations and Legislations

Our water safety policy is based on the following regulations and legislations:

- Education and Care Services National Law (South Australia) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) National Quality Standards
- Royal Life Saving Society Australia guidelines for safe aquatic activities for children.

National Quality Standard

Quality Area 2	Children’s Health and Safety
Standard 2.2	Each child is protected.
Element 2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
Element 2.2.2	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.

National law and regulations



- Section 165 Offence to inadequately supervise children
- Section 167 Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
- Regulation 25(1)(c) Additional information about proposed education and care service premises
- Regulation 101 Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
- Regulation 115 Premises designed to facilitate supervision
- Regulation 168(2)(a)(iii) Education and care services must have policies and procedures on water safety, including safety during any water-based activities

Water hazards in children's learning environments include:

A water hazard is defined as anything that can hold 5cm of water and fit a child's nose and mouth.

- Sinks, basins, fish tanks, fishbowls, baths
- Swimming pools, portable pools, spas
- Water courses, ponds, sandpits, clam shells
- Water troughs, containers and buckets used for play, animal drinking containers
- Pooling water

General Water Safety Measures

- Supervision: All children will be under constant supervision by a qualified and trained staff member while in and around the water. The staff to child ratio will be in accordance with ACECQA National Quality Standards.
- Sun protection: Children will be encouraged to wear sun-protective clothing, such as rash vests and hats, and sunscreen will be applied regularly.
- Hygiene: Children will be reminded and supported to wash their hands and change their clothes if required.
- Educators will ensure all stagnant water is tipped out after the completion of any water play. Children are not to access pooled water that has been stagnant for an extended period of time.

Water safety – Risk assessments

Risk assessments have been undertaken for a range of potential water safety hazards. These areas of risk include the mud kitchen, the water course, the sandpit and various water play learning experiences. For specific risks associated with different hazards, the risk assessments are located in the policy folder in the Director's office.

Communication and Training

Communication: The water safety policy will be communicated to all staff, parents, and caregivers. Any changes to the policy will also be communicated in a timely manner.

Training: All staff who are involved in water-related activities will undergo training and education in CPR and first aid. This training will be updated regularly to ensure that staff are up-to-date with the latest safety procedures.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency, the staff member in charge will immediately initiate emergency procedures and contact emergency services. Parents and caregivers will be notified of any incidents as soon as possible.



Government of South Australia

Department for Education



Staff will conduct a debrief after any incident to review the emergency procedures and identify any areas for improvement.

Creation Date: May 2023

Next Review: May 2025

Chairperson name:

Sign:

Date: