

## HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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
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

## PURPOSE

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.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Service.

## IMPLEMENTATION

New work health and safety (WHS) laws have commenced in NSW using consistent WHS legislation instead of previous OH&S laws:

The National Quality Framework establishes the standards and learning frameworks to provide high quality inclusive education and care in early childhood settings, which can only occur in a safe and healthy environment.

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. In any occurrences where children show any signs of illness, accident, injury or trauma, educators will refer to the *Incident, Illness, Accident & Trauma Policy*.

Our staff are committed to assist in infection prevention controls and have completed the COVID-19 infection control training.

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 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.

### Choosing Appropriate Resources and Equipment

- The Approved Provider is ultimately responsible for any purchases of equipment.
- Educators document any equipment that needs maintenance on a prioritised basis in the **maintenance register**.
- Resources and equipment are chosen to reflect the cultural diversity of the Service's community and the cultural diversity of contemporary Australia.

- If a resource is not purchased from a reputable distributor, the resource will be checked against Australian Safety Standards
- Equipment that should only be used under supervision is stored in a safe place out of children's reach. For example-hammers.
- The use of equipment which involves the use of water is used under the direct supervision of educators. All equipment is 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**.
- A **risk assessment** has been conducted on new pieces of equipment where appropriate.

### ON-GOING MAINTENANCE

- The management and staff reflects on the environment, ensuring that it is safe, secure, stimulating and engaging, fulfilling our centre philosophy.
- 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

Safety Checklists are important to identify any dangerous objects in the grounds, ranging from sharps to poisonous or dangerous plants and animals. To ensure the best practice, these are conducted at the beginning of each day.

In the event of a sharp object being found (for example a syringe) educators will wear gloves and use tongs to pick up the object and place it in the '**sharp object box**'. This box will be disposed of as per the recommendations of our local council.

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.

The Service has regular pest inspections carried out by an accredited pest control company. Documentation of these inspections will be kept and any findings from the pest control check will be carried out in line with the recommendation of the pest control company.

The *Indoor and Outdoor Daily Safety Checklists* are used as the procedure to conduct these safety checks. A record of these is kept by the Service. Any required maintenance is immediately reported to the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor who will make the appropriate arrangements to have repairs carried out. (The Hazard Register is also utilised where appropriate).

## CLEANING OF BUILDINGS, PREMISES, FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

### GENERAL CLEANING

- Highland Grove uses structured **cleaning schedules and Duty Rosters** 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 adheres to all recommended guidelines from the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).
- high touch surfaces are cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily
- cleaning contractors hygienically clean the Service to ensure risk of contamination is removed
- Contract cleaners clean the Service at the end of each day and educators clean throughout the day as needed.
- Accidents and spills are cleaned up as quickly as possible to ensure that the Service always maintains a high level of cleanliness, hygiene, and safety.

When purchasing, storing and/or using any dangerous chemicals, substances, medicines or equipment, our Service:

- adheres at all times to manufacturer's advice and instructions when using products to clean furniture and equipment at the Service
- stores all dangerous chemicals, substances, and medicines in their original containers provided by the manufacturer. All labels and/or use by dates should be kept intact at all times

- ensures containers are disposed of correctly following local council guidelines, and not reused under any circumstances
- ensures all dangerous chemicals, substances and equipment is stored in a locked place or facility which is labelled, secure and inaccessible to children. These materials may include, but are not limited to, all cleaning materials, detergents, poisonous or dangerous substances, dangerous tools and equipment including those with sharp edges.
- follows the instructions of manufacturers, particularly of any product which may need to be stored in a refrigerated environment
- dangerous substances (such as individual medications) is stored in a locked box in the refrigerator or high in a labelled cupboard.
- ensures all hazardous chemicals are supplied with a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) (formerly called a Material Data Safety Sheet). Our Service will adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for use, storage, and first aid instructions recorded on the SDS.
- ensure there is a register of all hazardous chemicals, substances and equipment used at the Service. Information recorded should include where they are stored, their use, any risks, first aid instructions, and the current SDS. The register will be readily accessible)
- seek medical advice immediately if poisoning or potentially hazardous ingestion, inhaled, skin or eye exposure has occurred, or call the Poisons Information Line on 13 11 26, or call an Ambulance on 000
- ensures emergency, medical and first aid procedures are carried out, with relevant notification given to the appropriate authority that administers workplace health and safety and any other person or authority as required by regulations or guidelines
- in any major emergency involving a hazardous chemical or equipment, a hazardous gas, or a fire or explosion hazard, call the emergency services: Dial 000 and also notify the appropriate authority that administers workplace health and safety and any other person or authority as required by regulations or guidelines
- the Poison Safety Checklist (from the Children's Hospital Kid's Health) will be used in order to ensure we are consistently meeting requirements.

## HAND WASHING

Effective handwashing is a vital strategy in the prevention of spreading many infectious diseases. Our Service ensures [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 or pets
- 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
- after using any chemical or cleaning fluid

## MINIMISING POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

Our Service minimises the use of potentially dangerous substances. Ordinary detergents will be used to help remove dirt from surfaces. Colour-coded sponges are used in order to eliminate cross contamination and are stored separately.

## DISINFECTANTS

Disinfectants are usually unnecessary as very few germs can survive exposure to fresh air and natural light. In an outbreak situation, such as gastroenteritis or other infectious virus (COVID-19) the Public Health Unit or SafeWork Australia, may specify the use of a particular disinfectant and increased frequency of cleaning.

## DETERGENTS

To work in accordance with *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*, proper cleaning with detergent and warm water, followed by rinsing and air-drying kills most germs from surfaces as they are unable to multiply in a clean environment.

## NAPPY CHANGE AREA

Nappy change areas must be cleaned after each use 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 placed in the sunlight after being cleaned. Refer to *Nappy Changing Policy and procedure*.

## 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, a labelled slip of paper attached and securely storing these items in a sealed container not placed in the child's bag. For more information refer to the *Nappy change and toileting procedure*.

## TOY CLEANING

Educators 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 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), Cleaning of toys and equipment is recorded in a cleaning register in each room.

## 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 tea-towel overnight is ideal.

## SUN PROTECTION

Our Service works in compliance with the NSW SunSmart Program to ensure children's health and safety is maintained at all times whilst at the Service. SunSmart recommends that all early childhood education and care services have a SunSmart Policy to reduce UV damage to those in care, including Educators. **Our Sun Safety Policy has been accepted and approved by SunSmart.** Please refer to our Sun Safe Policy.



## DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

The following procedure must be adhered to at all times to ensure the safety of the children.

### ARRIVAL

- All children must be signed in by their parent or person who delivers the child to our Service.
- An educator is to check the iPad, ensuring families have signed their child in. If families have not signed the child in, an educator or nominated supervisor will sign the child in, complying



with Regulation 158.

- An educator will greet and receive each child.
- A locker is made available for each child.

## DEPARTURE

- All children must be signed out by their parent or person who collects the child from our Service. If the parent or other person forgets to sign the child out, they will be signed out by the nominated supervisor or an educator.
- Children can only be collected by a parent, an authorised nominee named on their enrolment record, or a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee to collect the child. Children may leave the premises if a parent or authorised nominee provides written authorisation for the child to leave the premises ie excursion.
- Children will not be released into the care of a person not authorised to collect the child e.g. court orders concerning custody and access. If an unauthorised person is not willing to leave the premises without the child, the educator will call the police.
- Nominated Supervisors will ensure that the authorised nominee pick-up list for each child is kept up to date.
- If educators do not know the person by appearance, the person must be able to produce some photo identification. If educators cannot verify the person's identity they may be unable to release the child into that person's care.
- At the end of each day educators will check the premises to ensure that no child remains on the premises after the Service closes. Educators sign in their Room Diaries that this has occurred.
- Children may leave the premises in the event of an emergency, including medical emergencies as outlined in our *Emergency Evacuation Policy*.

## VISITORS

To ensure we can meet Work Health and Safety requirements and ensure the safety of our children, individuals visiting our Service must sign in when they arrive at the Service and sign out when they leave. Refer to our *Arrival and Departure Policy* and procedure for more detailed information.

## WATER SAFETY

To prevent accidents and illnesses relating to water situations we:

- remove any items or objects that could be used to climb into a trough, or water storage unit e.g. chairs, bins, bikes, any overhanging trees
- conduct a risk assessment to minimise the risk or hazard to children
- at all times children near water are closely supervised.

- ensure that all water containers are made inaccessible to children and make sure children's play areas are safely fenced off from water hazards.
- immediately empty all wading pools/water troughs etc. after every use, storage should prevent the collection of water e.g. upright/inverted.

## 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 environment. New hazards can emerge over time resulting in control strategies becoming ineffective and therefore may require updating.

## FURTHER RESOURCES

NSW: SafeWork NSW administers the Work Health and Safety legislation, and has several codes of practice on specific work safety issues which are available online at

<https://www.safework.nsw.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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