



2.21 Water Safety Policy

QUALITY AREA 2: Children's Health and Safety

Policy Statement

According to Kidsafe (the recognised authority on the prevention of injuries in children), drowning continues to be one of the main causes of fatalities of Australian children. Every year a number of children are killed and hundreds more are rescued from near drowning situations. Non-fatal drowning incidents are also of great concern as they can have potential long-term effects, including brain damage and permanent disability.

The most common factor in childhood drowning is lack of supervision. A child can drown in as little as a few centimetres of water. Items such as nappy buckets, sinks, pet drinking bowls, ponds, pools, water features and water tanks are potential drowning hazards.

Bellinggen Community Preschool values the multidisciplinary opportunities that water-based experiences offer to children. We know that children learn in relation and so adding water as a resource can provide rich opportunities for understanding and learning about our world. In addition, Bellinggen is curbed by rivers and various waterways. It is part of our identity, our context. We view safely exploring water as a way to connect with culture, place, and our community. In response we provide a variety of safe and supervised water-based encounters within our environment and our community.

The safety and supervision of children in and around water remains at the forefront of all experiences that we offer. We acknowledge that water troughs, sinks, buckets, and local waterways can all be hazardous for children and that diligent supervision is required always. The safety and supervision of children in and around water relates to water play, excursions near water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the Preschool environment. Children will always be supervised during water play experiences.

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for managing water safety, including during any water-based activities (regulation 168(2)(a) (iii)) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (regulation 170)

Water Safety Practices

- Children will be supervised at all times in and around any body of water including water troughs, toilets, mud kitchen sink and craft cleaning buckets.
- Educator to Child ratios will be increased for water-inclusive excursions where the ratio is 1 Educator for every 4 Children.
- Educator to Child ratios will be increased where the water play experience is deemed higher risk.
- No child will be left unattended at any stage around a body of water more than 6cm in depth.
- A risk assessment will be conducted prior to any excursion taking place. Particular attention will be focused upon water safety where the excursion is near a body of water.
- The thermostat on the hot water system is set to a medium temperature to ensure children are not able to scald themselves when washing hands.
- Children requiring bathing will be bathed using a washcloth and warm water rather than immersed in a bath.
- Educators are not permitted to consume hot drinks in any area accessible to children
- Water tanks will be labelled with “do not drink” signage and the children will be supervised in this area to make sure they are not accessing this water for drinking.
- Educators will discuss with the children that this water is for the purpose of play and not for consumption.
- Water for pets at the service will be changed regularly and not accessible to children unless supervised by an adult.
- Water containers of any sort will be emptied or covered when not in use.
- Drinking water containers will be emptied and cleaned daily.

National Quality Standards (NQS)

Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice		
1.1.1	Approved Learning Framework	Curriculum decision making contributes to each child’s learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.

Quality Area 2: Health and Safety		
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazards
2.3	Healthy Lifestyle	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment		
3.1.1	Fit for purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access for every child.

Roles and Responsibilities

<p>Approved Provider/ Nominated Supervisor will</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met • keep a child safe environment • ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios) • ensure risk assessments are undertaken and water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are taken into consideration • take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders • take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures • ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers, and available for inspection • notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or • significantly impact the service’s education and care of children or • significantly impact the family’s ability to utilise the service. • ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios) • inform families about water safety practices at the service • ensure first aid and CPR qualifications and requirements are met at all times • ensure that at least one educator, staff member or nominated supervisor who holds a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance at all times that children are being educated and cared for by the service • undertake risk assessments for excursions near water and for water-based activities • take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders • take reasonable steps to inform and support educators and staff of their responsibilities in implementing the policy and procedures at all times • guide and mentor educators and staff to be able to follow the policy and procedures.
<p>Early Childhood Educators will</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reinforce water safety messages within the children’s education program • make sure water hazards are managed as outlined in your procedure, e.g. water trough is emptied/covered/packed away when not in use • ensure buckets that contain liquids are not accessible to children • empty, safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers when they are not in use, e.g. mop buckets, nappy buckets, bathtubs, water troughs, pet water containers • ensure water troughs or containers for water play will be supervised at all times and containers or troughs will be emptied/covered after use • inspecting indoor and outdoor environments for potential water hazards, particularly during and after wet weather. • Ensure water troughs or containers are only filled while in attendance by an adult at all times. • Ensure no child is left unattended at any time with any body of water. • Ensuring no cleaning buckets are left in areas accessible to children. • Provide clean drinking water at all times

Families will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce water safety practice with children.
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Relevant Regulations

Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures on Water Safety
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
274	Swimming Pools NSW

Useful Resources

ACECQA Policy and Procedure Guidelines

Kidsafe Alive www.kidsalive.com.au

Kidsafe NSW

Kids Health <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/water-safety.html>

Review

POLICY REVIEWED	AUGUST 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE	AUGUST 2024
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additions of Philosophical and Contextual stance on Water Play. • Updating of practices in response to WHS Safety discussions in team Meetings this year. Professional Development Days Dec 2021. 		