
Policy Statement

We recognise that the physical environment can contribute to children's wellbeing, happiness and creativity. We aim to provide a physical environment, both indoors and outdoors, that is safe, appealing, constructive, well maintained and welcoming to all Educators, children, parents and visitors.

Procedures – OOSH and LDC

- ✓ The physical environment will be tobacco, drug and alcohol free.
- ✓ The physical environment will be welcoming and accessible for children and families and take into consideration cultural diversity, interests, learning styles, social and physical inclusion.
- ✓ The physical environment will provide opportunities for children to learn through play, enabling access to materials that stimulate investigation and reflection.
- ✓ Educators value both the indoor and outdoor environments that support children's learning, creativity, and social engagement.
- ✓ The physical environment will be set up with adequate materials and resources for the amount of children enrolled in the care environment, to provide new learning opportunities that extend and challenge children's learning and development.
- ✓ The play spaces provide children with the opportunity to explore and experience the natural environment.
- ✓ The physical environment should offer children opportunities to be active, messy, and noisy and play on a large scale, or be quiet, relaxed, and play in solitude.
- ✓ Educators are to ensure that areas in the environment do not become 'overcrowded', and that there is adequate space for children to play.
- ✓ Entrances and exits to various areas within the physical environment, both indoor and outdoor, should be free of clutter and hazards, to allow children, Educators, families and visitors to all areas of the physical environment.
- ✓ Areas will be made available for children to play independently or in groups of varying size.

Outdoor Environment – OOSH and LDC

- ✓ The outdoor area shall be easily accessible to Educators and children. At the beginning of each session the Safety Checklist will be completed, and areas will be inspected daily for any obstacles or dangerous items. These items shall be disposed of in a safe and careful manner prior to the children playing in the area.
- ✓ Wherever possible, outdoor learning experiences should be set up that complement and extend on indoor learning experiences and activities.
- ✓ Wherever possible, children should be encouraged to play in and with natural environments and resources, including gardens etc.
- ✓ Designated areas for play will enable adequate supervision to be maintained.
- ✓ Clear boundaries shall be set and enforced to maintain a safe environment for all children.
- ✓ Shaded areas will be used whenever possible when setting up activities.
- ✓ Shoes must be worn by Educators and children whilst outdoors at all times unless engaging in programmed activities where shoes are not required. (i.e. foot painting, or shoes may be removed to play in the sand pit)
- ✓ Educators and children will have access to clean drinking water.
- ✓ Use of other outdoor venues will be considered where:
 - Access to the area is safe
 - Adequate supervision can be maintained
 - The area is considered of value to the children's physical development and personal comfort
 - Where adequate staff/child ratios can be maintained both indoors and outdoors
- ✓ Written authorisation to be given by parents for Educators to take children outside the Service.

Indoor Environment – OOSH and LDC

- ✓ The indoor area shall be easily accessible to the Educators and children. At the beginning of each session the Safety Checklist will be completed and will be inspected daily for any obstacles or dangerous items. These items shall be disposed of in a safe and careful manner prior to the children playing in the area.

- ✓ Where children are indoors for long periods due to adverse weather conditions, special activities will be planned. Other areas in the School, such as the Hall, library, under cover spaces and verandahs will be utilised to allow children to disperse into smaller groups to play.
- ✓ The indoor area will be well ventilated and have adequate natural light.
- ✓ The indoor environment should be maintained at a temperature that ensures the wellbeing of the children and Educators.
- ✓ Easy access to areas shall be maintained by making clear, easily identified passageways and walkways through the building.
- ✓ All items obstructing passageways/walkways are to be removed and placed in the correct storage areas.
- ✓ Areas must be set up to ensure that proper supervision can be maintained at all times.
- ✓ The indoor area is to be set up to allow children to participate in a variety of activities with easy access to equipment.
- ✓ Wherever possible, design indoor environments that are enriched by natural resources and opportunities to engage with nature.
- ✓ Where possible separate areas in the indoor environment will be provided for:
 - Parents to sign their children in/out of care
 - Educators to answer phones, maintain daily records and complete administrative tasks
 - Educators and parents to talk in confidence
 - Storage of equipment, food, dangerous materials and family records
 - Preparation of food and drinks
 - Provide access to clean drinking water in the indoor and outdoor environments
 - Kitchen and disposal of garbage
 - Cleaning of equipment
 - Hand washing and hand drying facilities
 - Craft and other creative activities
 - Large and small group activities
 - Display of children's activities and work
 - Quiet space for children to retreat to, or to do homework or lie down if unwell

Facilities – OOSH and LDC

- ✓ Provide adequate, sufficient and accessible facilities for handwashing, toileting, eating and sleeping. Toileting and hand washing facilities will be accessible from the 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 one properly constructed nappy changing bench for children under three years of age.
- ✓ Providing secure and hygienic laundry facilities.
- ✓ Providing age-appropriate areas with resources.
- ✓ Regular risk assessments undertaken and reviewed to ensure risks are minimised.
- ✓ Cover unused power points with safety caps, securing all electrical cords and ensuring all power boards are inaccessible to children.

Safety Checks – OOSH and LDC

- ✓ To ensure the safety of all children, Educators are to complete daily Safety Checklists of premises and grounds
- ✓ Daily checks should include:
 - 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 eg syringes and place them in the sharps object container or a hard plastic container.
- ✓ Regular pest inspections of premises with records to verify inspection.

Considerations

Education and Care Services National Law

165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents

Education and Care Services National Regulations

73	Educational Program
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
81	Sleep and rest
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
80	Awareness of child protection law
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
98	Telephone or other communication equipment
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	Administration space
112	Nappy change facilities
113	Outdoor space – natural environment
114	Outdoor space - shade
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
123	Educator to child ratios – centre based services
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
183	Storage of records and other documents

Education and Care Services National Quality Standards

Quality Area	Standard	Element
QA 2 Children's health and safety	2.1 Health	2.1.1 Wellbeing and comfort
		2.1.2 Health practices and procedures
QA3 Physical environment	2.2 Safety	2.2.1 Supervision
		3.1 Design
	3.2 Use	3.1.1 Fit for purpose
		3.1.2 Upkeep
		3.2.1 Inclusive environment
		3.2.2 Resources support play based learning
		3.2.3 Environmentally responsible
QA 7 Governance and Leadership	7.1 Governance	7.1.2 Management Systems

Activity Centres Inc. Policies and Procedures

Building and Premises	Orientation
Child Protection	Pest
Child Safe Environment	Reporting to Regulatory Authority
Comfort	Security
Emergency	Sleep and Rest
Enrolment	Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol
Equipment and Maintenance of Equipment	Staff Child Ratio
First Aid Policy – Management of Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma	Storage
Hazardous Materials	Sun Protection
Hygiene and Cleaning	Supervision
Inclusion	Toileting and Nappy Change
Laundry	Water Safety
Observation	Work Health and Safety

My Time, Our Place

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children feel safe, secure and supported
Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

Early Years Learning Framework

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children feel safe, secure and supported
Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

Legislation

Kidsafe Australia	www.kidsafe.com.au
Unicef	www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention
Work Health and Safety	www.safework.nsw.gov.au

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Policy is only endorsed if initialled by 2 members of the Management Committee

Endorsed by the Management Committee on the 28 February 2023
 Physical Environment Policy is to be reviewed by the 28 February 2028