

WATER SAFETY POLICY & PROCEDURE

Section 165 & 167 Regulations 100, 101, 102 (b),115, 116B, 168, 168(2)(a)iii, 170-172

WATER SAFETY POLICY

Policy

In accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations, Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, Australian Federal Law, South Australian Laws and Regulations for Education and Care Services, Catholic Education South Australia, SA Health, Cancer Council of Australia, and The Early Years Learning Framework, this policy has been updated to include new laws and regulations governing water safety practices. It also emphasises the importance of conducting risk assessments and involving the child's voice in the process.

Definition of a body of water for the purposes of this policy, bodies of water include:

- Swimming pools, wading pools, lakes, ponds, the sea, creeks, dams, and rivers;
- Equipment used by the service that could contain 5cm or more of water and would allow a child to submerge both nose and mouth at the same time.

Background

Tenison Woods College Early Learning & Community Centre acknowledges the risks associated with bodies of water and places great importance on the safety of children and educators involved in water-based activities. The service will take all necessary precautions to ensure that children can enjoy water-based activities safely. Risk assessments will be conducted for programmed water-based activities, and the outcomes will determine the appropriate educator to child ratios for these activities.

National Quality Standards (NQS) Links

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 need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	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.

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 of every child.
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
3.1.3	Inclusive environment	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.

QUALITY AREA 4: STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

4.2	Professionalism	Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.
4.2.2	Professional standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
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QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.

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Legislative Requirements

Regulation 100 – Risk Assessments must be Conducted Before Excursion & Regulation 101 – Conduct of Risk Assessment for Excursion

- As stated in our excursion policy and procedure, risk assessments are carried out for incursions, excursions and events.
- Additional risk assessments for water in the Centre will occur annually or when a new water activity is set up.

Regulation 102 – Authorisation for Excursions

- Before authorisation of an excursion, water safety will be taken into consideration by the Director to ensure the children's safety.

Regulation 115 – Premises Designed to Facilitate Supervision

- All water areas are to have direct supervision when in use.

Regulation 116B – Inspection Report

- Responsible person of the service (Director) conducted inspection in association with Work, Health and Safety Officer ensuring safe for child use.
- Risk assessment created to ensure continued safety of permanent water feature.

Regulation 168 – Education and Care Services Must Have Policies and Procedures

- Our Centre has policies and procedures as set out in sub regulation 2 in Regulation 168.

Regulation 170 – Policies and Procedures to be Followed

- Nominated Supervisors, staff members and volunteers all have an understanding of all policies and procedures and ensure they are followed at the service.

Regulation 171 – Policies and Procedures to be Kept Available

- Digital copies of our policies and procedures are available via a QR code in our foyer, in our digital PowerQIP and in our handbook. A hard copy of our policies and procedures can be found in the ELCC Office.

Regulation 172 – Notification of Change of Policies and Procedures

- All families are notified and sent updated policies and procedures.
- If a change to policy is planned, significantly affecting families, they will be given 14 days' notice.

Principles to Inform Policy

Priority of Safety, Health, and Wellbeing:

- The safety, health, and wellbeing of children are our utmost priorities.
- All water-based activities will be conducted with a focus on ensuring the safety of each child.
- No child will be left unattended when in proximity to water.

Importance of Water-Based Play:

- Water-based play is recognised as a crucial element in children's healthy growth, learning, wellbeing, and development.
- Educators and staff will implement all necessary precautions to safeguard children during water-based play experiences.
- Such activities are designed to contribute positively to the overall development of the child.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Clear roles and responsibilities are established to ensure that management, educators, and other staff members are fully aware of their duties regarding water safety.
- Every team member has a designated role in maintaining a safe water environment, including adequate supervision and prompt response to any safety concerns.

Incorporation of Water Safety in Education:

- Water safety awareness is seamlessly integrated into the educational program.
- Opportunities are created for children to learn and develop their understanding of water safety principles.
- Educational experiences related to water safety contribute to the overall development of children in a positive and informative manner.

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Continuous Supervision:

- Ongoing, vigilant supervision is a fundamental practice during all water-related activities.
- Educators and staff members are trained to maintain a watchful eye on children to prevent accidents and respond promptly to any emerging risks.

Emergency Preparedness:

- Comprehensive emergency procedures are in place to address any unforeseen water-related incidents.
- Staff members are trained and regularly updated on emergency response protocols to ensure swift and effective action in case of emergencies.

Regular Review and Improvement:

- The Water Safety Policy is subject to regular review to assess its effectiveness.
- Feedback from educators, staff, and relevant stakeholders is actively sought to identify areas for improvement and ensure the policy remains current and robust.

These principles form the foundation of Tenison Woods College Early Learning & Community Centre's commitment to water safety, reflecting a proactive and child-centric approach to creating a secure environment for all water-based activities.

Key Terms

- **ACECQA (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority):** The independent national authority that administers the National Quality Framework.
- **Adequate Supervision:**
 - An educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation
 - Knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently.
- **Approved First Aid qualifications:** A qualification that includes training in the matters set out below, that relates to, and is appropriate to, children, and has been approved by ACECQA and published on the list of ACECQA's approved First Aid qualifications and training. Matters are likely to include: Emergency life support and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation; convulsions; poisoning; respiratory difficulties; management of severe bleeding; injury and basic wound care; and administration of an auto-immune adrenalin device.
- **Risk Assessment:** Assessing the risk means working out how likely it is that a hazard will harm someone and how serious the harm could be.
- **Serious incident:** For the purposes of the definition of serious incident in section 5(1) of the Law, each of the following is prescribed as a serious incident:
 - a. The death of a child— i. while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service; or ii. following an incident occurring while that child was being educated and cared for by an education and care service;
 - b. Any incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child occurring while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service - i. which a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or ii. for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital. Example: A broken limb.
 - c. Any incident involving serious illness of a child occurring while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital. Example: Severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis reaction.
 - d. Any emergency for which emergency services attended;
 - e. Any circumstance where a child being educated and cared for by an education and care service i. appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for; or ii. appears to have been taken or removed from the education and care service premises in a manner that contravenes these Regulations; or iii. is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the education and care service premises or any part of the premises.
- **Hazard:** Situations or things that have the potential to harm a person.
- **Water hazard:** Any water body that poses a potential drowning risk to children and could include:
 - Large bodies of water, such as rivers, creeks, dams, ponds, swimming pools, jetted bathtubs (or jacuzzi), inground spas, above ground portable spas (or hot tubs) or any container with poor drainage that allows water to pool.
 - Smaller bodies of water, such as baths, nappy buckets and pet water containers.

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Links to Other Policies:

- Providing a child safe environment
- The administration of first aid
- Emergency and evacuation
- Excursions
- Incident, injury, trauma and illness

Induction and Ongoing Training:

- Induction training and ongoing training will be provided to managers, coordinators, educators, and staff to assist them in fulfilling their roles effectively in implementing this policy.

Policy Created/Reviewed:

- This policy was created in January 2024 and will be reviewed annually or as necessary to ensure compliance with regulations and alignment with best practices.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review:

- This policy will be regularly monitored for compliance by designated staff members and reviewed as necessary to ensure it aligns with current regulations and guidelines.

References:

- South Australian Health: <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/>
- Catholic Education South Australia: <https://www.cesa.catholic.edu.au/>
- Kid Safe – Water Safety Outdoors and Indoors <https://www.kidsafensw.org/safety/home-community/water-safety/water-safety-outdoors/>
- National Regulations and Law for Childcare and Early Learning Services: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/>
- ACECQA: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/>
- NQS: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>
- EYLF: https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-03/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia_0.pdf
- UV Rating and Cancer Council policy: <https://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/>

Reviewed by David Meziniec
Tenison Woods College Principal



Signed:
Dated: 14.7.24

Reviewed by Fran Scanlon
Early Learning & Community Centre Director



Signed:
Dated: 12.7.24

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WATER SAFETY PROCEDURE

Procedure Statement:

Tenison Woods College Early Learning & Community Centre is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children in our care. As part of our dedication to providing a high-quality early learning environment, we have developed this Water Safety Policy to comply with relevant regulations and guidelines from South Australian Health, Catholic Education South Australia, National Regulations and Law for Childcare and Early Learning Services, ACECQA, NQS, EYLF, UV rating, and Cancer Council policy. The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures and guidelines for water safety within our Early Learning & Community Centre. It aims to ensure that all water-related activities are conducted in a safe and supervised manner, reducing the risk of accidents or harm to children.

Background:

Water activities are an important part of Australian life, providing children with opportunities for learning, experience, and fun. However, bodies of water present significant hazards that require increased vigilance from our service educators to ensure the safety of children. It is essential to acknowledge that even shallow water can pose a drowning risk to children.

Implementation

To ensure the safety of children around bodies of water, the Centre will:

- Conduct thorough risk assessments for all water-based activities, actively involving the child's voice in the process.
- Ensure there are educators present who possess a current, approved First Aid qualification, including CPR.
- Give preference to venues that provide additional supervision in the form of lifeguards.
- Position educators in a way that enables direct and active supervision of any child accessing a body of water., following KidSafe Australia's advice and always being an arm's length away from a child and the water body.
- Avoid venues with bodies of water where sufficient precautions cannot be taken to ensure the safety of children.

Water Play and Pools of Water

- Water play activities will be conducted in accordance with the National Regulations and Law for Childcare & Early Learning Services, ensuring that water is clean, safe, and appropriate for children's ages and abilities.
- All water used for water play will meet the health and safety standards set by South Australian Health.
- Children will be provided with appropriate swimming attire, such as swimwear for older children, to maintain hygiene standards, on water day's at the Centre.
- Pools of water will be supervised at all times and safety put away in the shed when unused.
- When going inside and no adults left outside any water play should be tipped out or covered, lowering the risk of drowning in the Centre or unsupervised water play.
- The ESB SA audit will be done ever six months to ensure all water play and areas as the river is safe in the Centre
- When coming inside and no adults left outside the signs on the doors will be changed to 'STOP' letting children and adults understand, no outside play is to occur.

Supervision and Risk Assessment

- Adequate and continuous supervision will be provided during all water-related activities, including water play and swimming.
- A staff member will always be within an arm's length of a water-based activity, outside and inside.
- The staff-to-child ratio will adhere to the requirements set by the National Regulations and Law for Childcare and Early Learning Services, ensuring sufficient supervision and attention to individual children's needs.
- Risk assessments will be conducted annually or when deemed necessary, to identify and mitigate potential hazards associated with water play.
- Child and Family voice will be sort with a discussion occurring with the children to ensure they understand the potential dangers and how to be safe around water.
- If an excursion has a water body, a discussion with the children will be had around how they can remain safe at all times.

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- If a child requires additional inclusion support or is unaware of potential dangers around them, a specific risk assessment will be completed with the child(ren) in mind and the family, ensuring they are safe at all times and all staff understand the actions to be taken.
- Staff members will receive appropriate training on water safety, including CPR and First Aid, to ensure prompt response in case of emergencies.
- There are many drowning hazards in the Centre. Staff will ensure supervision is provided at all times around areas including the river and outdoor water play but also understand the drowning risk and supervision needed when using, buckets, washing machines, toilets, water tanks, aquariums and troughs.
- Educators will always be an arm's length away from these water areas.

Sun Protection and UV Rating

- The Centre will implement a sun protection policy, in line with the guidelines provided by the Cancer Council, to minimise children's exposure to harmful UV radiation.
- Children are required to wear broad-brimmed hats & sun-protective clothing for outdoor water play activities.
- Sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 30+ will be applied to children's exposed skin before outdoor water activities.
- Outdoor play areas will provide adequate shade and shelter to minimise direct sun exposure.

Roles and Responsibilities

Our roles and responsibilities for implementing these procedures are aligned with the Education and Care Services National Regulations. They include the following:

Approved Provider:

- Ensure that obligations under the Education & 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; in a FDC setting, ensure risk assessments are undertaken monthly and records are made and kept.
- 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: 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.

Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person (Director)

- Ensure 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.

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Centre-based Educators:

- Reinforce water safety messages within the children's education program.
- Take sure water hazards are managed as outlined in your procedure, eg water trough is emptied and packed away as soon as play has ended.
- 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, eg 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 after use.
- Inspecting indoor and outdoor environments for potential water hazards, particularly during and after wet weather.

Importance

Water safety is of utmost importance to protect children from the risk of drowning and other water-related accidents. By implementing this policy, Tenison Woods College Early Learning & Community Centre aims to provide a safe and secure environment for children to engage in water play and swimming activities, while complying with the relevant regulations and guidelines. This policy ensures that our Centre aligns with best practices, prioritises the well-being of children, and provides a foundation for quality education and care.