Child Safe Environment Policy

Policy: To keep the centre free of environmental hazards and prevent accident and injury to all children, staff and any others who may be in the centre or its grounds.

NOTE: This policy is an overview and is supported by many other policies under Health & Safety.

Background: Child health and safety is an essential part of children’s growth and development and requires policies and procedures in place to ensure a high standard of safety and minimize accidents and injuries within the centre environment.

Practice:

General Safety

- All areas of the centre and premises will be maintained in a clean and tidy manner.
- Pathways and floor spaces where appropriate will be kept clear and safe from tripping hazards.
- Educators will discuss dangerous situations, dangerous substances and items and safety practices with the children regularly. This will be reflected in the educational program across the curriculum.
- Educators will post simple warning signs around the centre where potentially dangerous substances or items are stored.
- The centre will provide parents with written information about accident prevention, safety and safe storage of potentially dangerous products and items in the home.
- All hot water taps will be temperature controlled to deliver water 43.5 degrees Celsius or below to prevent scalding.
- Children will not have access to water play activities unless under supervision by educators. Equipment used in water activities e.g. buckets and water trough will be emptied after use and safely secured indoors so as not to be a catchment for water (drowning hazard).
- Children will be supervised at all times, in accordance with the licensing conditions on educators/child ratios.
- Educators will be aware of the need to place themselves in positions which allow good supervision of the play areas and children.
- Children will not be permitted to play on fences or gates, play with locks on gates, or throw sand or water.
- No child will be allowed to leave the premises without an authorised adult.
- Daily Safety Checks are completed by the Director and educators who set up the environment.
- Educators are required to have approved up to date First Aid, Asthma and Anaphylaxis training. There will always be at least one educator on site with current approved first aid qualifications.

Electrical Safety and Fire Hazards

- Electrical outlets (power points) will be of a suitable approved safety type, located out of reach of children if possible or will be covered with safety caps. When not in use all power points will be covered with safety caps.
- Electrical appliances and cords will be kept out of reach of children unless under direct supervision by an educator.
- There will be an approved electrical cut off switch installed at the premises, to break the electrical circuit instantly if a person touches any live electrical source.
- Approved fire extinguishers in good working order will be located throughout the premises.
- There are approved fire blanket located in both kitchens.
- Smoke detectors are installed by a professional tradesman and linked to the electrical system.
- No smoking, consumption of alcohol or drugs will be allowed on the premises at any time.
- All educators will be informed of emergency exits and evacuation procedures. Evacuation drills will be practiced regularly.
- Electrical equipment is checked regularly by I.T. staff to see if it is in good condition.
- Double adaptors will only be used in power points which are inaccessible to children.
- Heaters and fans will be kept out of reach of children. The main source of heating and cooling at the premises is internal.
- The kitchen area will be out of bounds to children unless under direct supervision of an educator. Doors to the staffroom office/kitchen have handles out of reach to children.
Storage of dangerous substances and items

The centre will have appropriate, secure and child safe storage facilities for:

- Medications
- First aid equipment
- Cleaning and other harmful chemicals
- Harmful instruments and implements e.g. gardening tools, work tools, knives, sharp objects, adult scissors, matches and lighters.
- The storage facilities will be appropriate for the items e.g. stored out of a child’s reach and height, made secure by a lock and key mechanism, with the key stored away from the lock in a place inaccessible to a child, or by the use of an approved child safety latch.
- Cleaning materials and fly sprays will not be stored with food products.
- All areas where chemicals and solvents are used will be well ventilated.
- The Cleaning Company will make available adequate information about any substance used in the centre, to ensure that the substance will be safe and without risk to health when properly used.
- When using any chemical substance educators will:
  - Read any Material Data Sheet, and follow the manufacturer’s directions for use, storage and first aid instructions on the label.
  - Use the approved personal protective clothing equipment such as gloves, aprons, goggles, masks, etc when using chemicals.
  - Never store chemicals in soft drink bottles, or other food or drink containers.
  - Cleaning chemical are stored in the laundry area with high handles for children to not access.

Building, Furniture, Fittings, Fencing and Gates

- The building will be maintained in good working order by the centre, with the assistance of BGS maintenance & grounds staff where appropriate.
- Fencing and gates at the centre will be maintained in good condition and will meet the requirements set down by regulations and Australian Standards. They will be checked regularly for splinters, sharp edges, protruding or loose screws or bolts.
- Gates are fitted with approved child safe self-closing mechanisms.
- The centre will be kept clean and tidy. Floors will be smooth and even with non slip surfaces. Paint on walls will be maintained in a reasonable and safe condition to ensure children have no access to old paint.
- Furniture and fittings will be kept in good condition, cleaned and will be suitable for the age group of the children using it e.g. the height and size of tables, chairs, shelving, toilets, basins.
- Shelving or cupboards will be secure. Chair legs will have secure legs with rubber caps at base. Table tops will have rounded corners.
- Furniture and equipment will be placed in safe positions, not blocking walkways or posing tripping hazards.
- Furniture will be checked regularly for possible safety hazards. If found, it will be withdrawn from use till repaired.

Toys and Equipment

- Equipment purchased will be checked for safety.
- Toys and equipment will be in good condition and clean and will be appropriate to the age and development of the children.
- Damaged or broken toys and equipment will be repaired or replaced when they are found or will be withdrawn from use till they are repaired.
- Toys and equipment will be cleaned regularly with water, detergent and disinfectant.
- Toys and equipment will be put away when not in use.
- Any toy or equipment purchased will be used to encourage non violent play.
- All art and craft materials purchased will be non toxic.
- Potentially dangerous items used with the children e.g. knives for cooking experiences will be supervised by educators during activities. Items will be removed from activity areas when not in use and stored appropriately.
- All outdoor equipment will comply with current Australian Standards and regulations.
- When setting up the playground environment educators members will be aware of; soft fall surfaces under and around equipment, the height from which a child can fall, the size of the equipment, the age and development of the children, the need to check for sharp or rough edges, holes or areas that can
trap body parts, the need to maintain equipment in good order, safe positioning on even surfaces, securely anchored, and not too close to other equipment or movement pathways.  
- Adequate shade areas will be provided through shade sails, large trees and awnings.
- Poisonous or toxic plants will be removed from the centre.
- Trees and shrubs found to have low or dangerous branches will be pruned to ensure safety for all.
- Insects, bugs and small creatures which could pose a hazard to educators and children will be removed from the premises when found.

The centre will be sprayed annually by a professional pest controller (cockroaches, spiders, etc). This will be done during a vacation period.

**Road Safety**

- Parents will be encouraged to:
  - Remove their child from the car door on the footpath side of the road (the safety door side).
  - Always hold their child’s hand when crossing the road.
  - Drive within the speed limit for this area and the roads surrounding the centre and to watch for pedestrians.
  - Not double park cars.
  - Always use approved child restraints when traveling in cars.

**Who is affected by this policy?**

- Children, families and staff

**Links to National Quality Standard**

- 2.1 Each child’s health is promoted
- 2.3.1 Children are adequately supervised at all times
- 2.3.2 Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury
- 2.3.3 Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented
- 2.3.4 Educators, coordinators and staff members are aware of their roles and responsibilities to respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect

**Resources:**

- Staying Healthy in Childcare – Preventing Infectious Disease in Child Care 4th edition
- [www.kidsafensw.org](http://www.kidsafensw.org)