

WATER SAFETY POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 2

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following GRPSA policies:

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Educational Program and Practice Policy*
- *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

PURPOSE

This policy will outline the procedures that apply to managing water safety, including safety during any water-based activities at Goulburn Region Preschool Assoc Inc. service.

POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Goulburn Region Preschool Assoc Inc. is committed to:

- Providing opportunities for children to explore their natural environment including through water play.
- Ensuring that children are protected from the risks associated with drowning or non-fatal drowning experiences.
- Ensuring that curriculum planning incorporates water safety awareness.
- Providing information to educators, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, and others at the service about water safety.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor^s, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Goulburn Region Preschool Assoc Inc. services, including during offsite excursions and activities.

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Ensuring that paramount consideration is applied in all decisions and actions related to the operation and delivery of education and care services that consistently prioritise children's safety, rights and best interests above all other considerations.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers have access to this policy and have a clear understanding of the procedures and practices outlined within
- Ensuring that children are adequately supervised at all times when near water hazards.
(*Education and Care Services National Law Act*): Section 165

- Ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times (*Education and Care Services National Law Act: Sections 169(1) & (3), Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 123, 357*)
- Ensuring that all educators' current approved first aid qualifications meet the requirements of the National Regulations and are approved by ACECQA (refer to *Administration of First Aid Policy*)
- Ensuring that an educator with a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance and immediately available at all times children are being educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 136)
- Ensuring that details of current approved first aid qualifications are filed with each staff member's record.
- Reporting serious incidents to Department of Education.
- Reporting notifiable incidents to WorkSafe Victoria.
- Ensuring that water safety awareness is embedded in the curriculum.

All Early Childhood Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that paramount consideration is applied in all decisions and actions related to the operation and delivery of education and care services that consistently prioritise children's safety, rights and best interests above all other considerations.
- Conducting a risk assessment in relation to any water hazards on or near the premises that may be accessible to children. (Regulation 168(2)(A)(iii))
- Ensuring permission is obtained from parents/guardians for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard (refer to *Excursions and Service Events Policy*)
- Ensuring that water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other offsite events (Regulation 101)
- Undertaking a risk assessment prior to an excursion to a location where there is a significant water hazard (refer to *Excursions and Service Events Policy*)
- Ensuring increased levels of supervision for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)
- Conducting a regular safety check of the service premises (refer to *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*)
- Providing current information to parents about water safety.
- Assisting the Approved Provider to implement the *Water Safety Policy*
- Ensuring information on water safety is incorporated into the educational program.
- Ensuring that children are adequately supervised and protected from hazards and harm at all times. (*Education and Care Services National Law Act*): Section 165
- Ensuring that water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other offsite events (Regulations 100, 101)
- Maintaining a current approved first aid qualification
- Ensuring that an educator with a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance and immediately available at all times children are being educated and cared for by the service as required by the regulations under which the service is operating at the time.
- Informing the Approved Provider immediately if any serious or notifiable incidents occur at the service.
- Adjusting supervision strategies to suit the activities being undertaken (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)

- Ensuring gates and other barriers restricting access to water hazards are closed at all times and that fences are kept clear at all times.
- Ensuring that containers of water (including hand washing buckets, nappy buckets and cleaning buckets) are sealed with child-proof lids.
- Ensuring wading/paddling pools, water play containers and portable water courses are emptied immediately after each use and stored in a manner that prevents the collection of water when not in use.
- Checking the outdoor learning environment as required for puddles or filled containers that could pose a potential risk to small children after heavy rain.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Supervising children in their care, including siblings, while attending or assisting at the service.
- Ensuring that doors, gates, and barriers, including playground gates, are closed after entry or exit to prevent access to water hazards.
- Informing themselves about water safety.
- Ensuring their children understand the risks associated with water.
- Recognising when resuscitation is required and obtaining assistance.
- Considering undertaking approved first aid qualifications, as resuscitation skills save lives.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- Regularly seek feedback from educators, staff, parents/guardians, children, management, and all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness.
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints, and incidents in relation to this policy.
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy, and best practice.
- Revise the policy and procedures as part of the GRPSA policy review cycle, or as required.
- Notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by Goulburn Region Preschool Assoc Inc. in August 2012.

Reviewed and Approved: 24th September 2016.

Reviewed and Accepted: August 2020

Reviewed and Approved: August 2026

REVIEW DATE: AUGUST 2029