

Avoca Beach Preschool

Background

Children have the right to be safe. The physical environment plays a critical role in keeping children safe, particularly as they are often unable to identify risks and dangers for themselves. In early education and care services, the buildings, furniture and equipment must meet initial service approval requirements and, after that, be kept safe, clean and well-maintained so that unintentional injuries to children and adults in the service are minimised.

Policy statement

This Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Approved Provider, staff and educators in maintaining a safe and suitable physical environment for children and adults at the Service.

Strategies and practices

- The Service's building, facilities, furniture and equipment meet licensing requirements and those of all relevant national and state regulatory bodies, local council, and the Building Code of Australia.
- Play equipment has been installed strictly according to manufacturers' recommendations. All fixed equipment meets the Australian/New Zealand Safety Standards, and is well maintained.
- All toys meet Australian Safety Standards, and are age appropriate, well maintained and have non-toxic finishes.
- The Service employs a handyman to repair equipment when necessary. A Maintenance Book is used to record the details of repairs. No item is used after repair until the Nominated Supervisor has checked and approved the repair.
- Educators complete a Safety Check List – Outdoor Daily and a Safety Check List – Indoor Daily before the Service opens to ensure the environment is safe for children. Each Friday morning after the check is completed, the lists are taken to the main office to be filed.
- In order to determine the safe air and surface temperatures for children to play on different outdoor equipment and surfaces, educators use an infrared thermometer, or like instrument, to measure the surface temperature of outdoor equipment at various times of the day. The data gathered is recorded on the Outdoor Play Surface Temperature Check form.
- Staff maintain a clean and healthy sandpit by cleaning the sandpit weekly in accordance with the Service's Sandpit Cleaning Procedure, and then completing the Sandpit Cleaning Register.
- Should any matter requiring immediate attention be identified during the educators' checks, educators complete a Hazard Report Form and place it the designated place for the Nominated Supervisor's immediate attention.

Child Safe Environments

- The Service is safe, clean and well maintained. Refer to the *Service's Cleaning Policy*.
- The Nominated Supervisor conducts a comprehensive Service safety audit every three months, and documents it. This audit covers all play areas, approaches to the Service, outdoor environments, kitchen, laundry and other utility areas, fences and general maintenance items. Any items requiring attention are recorded in the Maintenance Book, and the audit document filed.
- Every two years, the Service engages an external expert to conduct a compliance and safety audit of every aspect of the Service's building and facilities.

Additional safe practices for babies

- All equipment (e.g. cots, high chairs, prams) used by babies is regularly cleaned and serviced.

Responsibilities of parents

- To ensure their children do not drop items along pathways, halls and entry areas when entering or leaving the Service.
- To ensure that they close the gates and doors securely behind them as they move into and out of the building and rooms.
- To drive slowly and carefully in and around the driveways and car park areas as children may be moving through those spaces with parents.

Procedures and forms

- Hazard Report Form
- Maintenance Book
- Outdoor Play Surface Temperature Check
- Safety Checklist – Indoor Daily
- Safety Checklist – Outdoor Daily
- Sandpit Cleaning Procedure
- Sandpit Cleaning Register.

Links to other policies

- Cleaning Policy
- Dangerous Products, Plants, Vermin and Objects Policy
- Supervision Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Child Safe Environments

Regs	103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
	104	Fencing and security
	105	Furniture and equipment
	168	Education and care facilities must have policies and procedures

QA	2.1.3	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child
	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
	3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child
	3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Framework 2018 (September 2020 Update): Section 4 – Operational Requirements <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/Guide-to-the-NQF-September-2020.pdf> accessed 30 December 2020

Further reading and useful websites *(Consistent with the approach of the National Quality Framework, the following references have prioritised efficacy and appropriateness to inform best practice, and legislative compliance over state or territory preferences.)*

- Kidsafe – <http://www.kidsafe.com.au/> accessed 30 December 2020
- Kidsafe. (2019). *Playground Hazards*. <https://www.kidsafensw.org/playground-safety/playground-hazards/> accessed 30 December 2020
- Standards Australia – <http://www.standards.org.au/> accessed 30 December 2020

Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Version Control

Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	8 January 2018	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 February 2018. Service to modify policies to its specific needs.	
2	6 September 2019	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Update references.	
3	29 November 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
4	30 December 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
5	29 June 2021		Updated in Staff meeting 29 June. Sent email to Parent committee 30 June	June 2022