

WATER SAFETY

QUALITY AREA 2 – CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY



PURPOSE

This policy will outline the procedures that apply to managing water safety, including safety during any water-based activities at Sparkways.



POLICY STATEMENT

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Sparkways is committed to:

- the safety, health and wellbeing of children. All water-based activities will be adequately supervised and no child will be left unattended when in proximity to water
- ensuring that the approved provider, educators and all other staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to water safety
- 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, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Sparkways, including during offsite excursions and activities.



RESPONSIBILITIES

	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Nominated first aid officer	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted						
Ensuring that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children, staff and others at the service from harm and hazards that are likely to cause injury (<i>National Law: Section 167</i>)	R	R	√			
Assessing the first aid requirements for the service (<i>refer to Attachment 3</i>). A first aid risk assessment can assist with this process (<i>refer to Attachment 4</i>)	R	√		√		
Ensuring that at least one early childhood teacher [ECT]/educator with current approved first aid qualifications (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) is in attendance and immediately available at all times that children are being educated and cared for by the service (<i>Regulation 136(1) (a)</i>). This can be the same person who has anaphylaxis management training and emergency asthma management training	R	√				
Ensuring that the prescribed educator-to-child ratios are met at all times (<i>refer to Supervision of Children Policy</i>)	R	√	√			
Appointing a staff member or nominated supervisor to be the nominated first aid officer. This is a legislative requirement where there are 10 or more employees but is also considered best practice where there are fewer than 10 employees	R	√				
Advising families that a list of first aid and other health products used by the service is available for their information, and that first aid kits can be inspected on request	√	√	√	√		
Providing and maintaining an appropriate number of up-to-date, easily recognisable, readily accessible, suitably equipped first aid kits (<i>refer to Attachment 3</i>), with in-date products that meet Australian Standards (<i>refer to Definitions</i>). The appropriate number of kits will depend on the number of children in the service, the number of rooms and their proximity to each other, and distances from outdoor spaces to the nearest kit	R	√		√		
Ensuring procedures are developed for the regular monitoring of all first aid kits	R	√		√		
Ensuring defibrillators are maintained and regularly tested and serviced, including cyclical replacement of pads and batteries as per manufacturer specifications	√	√		√		
Ensuring a risk assessment is conducted prior to an excursion to identify risks to health, safety, or wellbeing and specifying how these risks will be managed and minimised (<i>Regulations 100, 101, 102B, 102C</i>). Refer to <i>Excursions and Service Events Policy and Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy</i>	R	√	√			
Ensuring that the Ambulance Victoria AV How to Call Card (<i>refer to Sources</i>) is displayed near all telephones or in a visible location.		√	√			
Providing and maintaining a portable first aid kit that can be taken offsite for excursions and other activities (<i>refer to Attachment 3</i>)	R	√	√	√		

Ensuring that first aid training details, and renewal dates are recorded on each staff member's record	R	√				
Ensuring safety signs showing the location of first aid kits are clearly displayed (<i>refer to Attachment 3</i>)	R	√		√		
Ensuring there is an induction process for all new staff, casual and relief staff, that includes providing information on the location of first aid kits and specific first aid requirements	R	√				
Ensuring that parents are notified within 24 hours if their child is involved in an incident, injury, trauma or illness at the service and recording details on the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)	R	√	√			
Notifying DET within 24 hours of a serious incident (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) occurring at the service	R	√				
Ensuring that staff are offered support and debriefing following a serious incident requiring the administration of first aid (<i>refer to Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy</i>)	√	√				
Ensuring a resuscitation flow chart (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) is displayed in a prominent position in the indoor and outdoor environments of the service (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>)	√	√		√		
Keeping up to date with any changes in procedures for administration of first aid and ensuring that all educators are informed of these changes	R	√				
Implementing appropriate first aid procedures when necessary (<i>refer to Attachment 1 & 2</i>)		√	√	√		
Maintaining current approved first aid qualifications, and qualifications in anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management, as required		R	R	R		
Practicing CPR and administration of an auto-injector at least annually (in accordance with other service policies)		R	R	R		
Ensuring that all children are adequately supervised (<i>refer to the Supervision of Children Policy</i>) while providing first aid and comfort for a child involved in an incident or suffering trauma (<i>refer to Attachment 2</i>)	R	√	√			
Ensuring that the details of any incident requiring the administration of first aid are recorded on the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) no later than 24 hours after the occurrence (<i>refer to Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy</i>)	R	√	√			
Ensuring the parent/guardian reads and signs the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record		√	√			
Notifying the approved provider or nominated supervisor six months prior to the expiration of their first aid, asthma or anaphylaxis accredited training			√	√		
Ensuring all out of date first aid kit contents are disposed of safely. The safest way to dispose of unused/out of date medicines is through the Return Unwanted Medicines (RUM) scheme which is run by a government funded organisation called The National Return & Disposal of Unwanted Medicines Limited: https://returnmed.com.au/	√	√	√	√		
Providing the required information on the service's medication record (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) when child requires administration of medication (<i>refer to Administration of Medication Policy</i>)					R	
Notifying the service of any medical conditions or specific medical treatment required for their child. Where necessary, in consultation with staff, develop appropriate medical management plans and risk minimisation plans (e.g. asthma, anaphylaxis). Providing any required medication. (<i>refer to Asthma Policy and Anaphylaxis Policy</i>)					R	

Providing written consent (via the enrolment record) for service staff to administer first aid and call an ambulance, if required					R	
Being contactable, either directly or through emergency contacts listed on the child's enrolment record, in the event of an incident requiring the administration of first aid					√	



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

The supervision and safety of children with and around water is of paramount importance.

Learning spaces and environments should offer an array of possibilities and connect children with natural materials. Water is one experience that offers children sensory-rich, open-ended experiences that engage their curiosity and imagination. Children may encounter these resources in the service environment and/or when on excursions. These experiences, especially those conducted with and near water, will be carefully supervised ensuring the safety of children and adults. It is imperative that educators remain vigilant in their supervision of children in and around water and are alert to potential risks in everyday practice in the learning environment.

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Water safety relates to access to water in the building, the playground or on excursions, and to the availability of drinking water for children. It is important for services to have detailed risk assessments that consider any water hazards and associated risks, including water-based activities and excursions near water. The service's policy and procedures should outline quality practices relating to water safety that align with the NQS.

It is imperative that educators remain vigilant in their supervision of children in and around water and are alert to potential risks in everyday practice in the learning environment.

Drowning is a leading cause of death for children in Victoria, with infants and toddlers the group most at risk. Non-fatal drowning incidents can result in permanent brain damage and disability. Knowledge of potential hazards associated with water will assist educators to provide a safe, stimulating environment for preschool children.

Drowning hazards include large bodies of water such as swimming pools, rivers, creeks, dams and ponds. Smaller bodies of water, including nappy buckets, water containers, pet water bowls and poor drainage which allows water to collect can also present drowning hazards for young children. Children can drown in as little as a few centimetres of water.

Keep Watch is a public education program of Royal Life Saving Society – Australia, aimed at preventing the drowning deaths of children under 5 years of age in all aquatic locations. The program has four key actions:

- **supervise** children constantly around water
- **restrict access** to water hazards by using child-proof barriers and fences
- provide **water awareness** training to children
- **resuscitation** saves lives – ensure that staff have completed current first aid training

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the Sparkways policy catalogue.

Hazard: A source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.

Water hazard: (in relation to this policy) can lead to drowning or non-fatal drowning incidences. Drowning hazards include large bodies of water such as swimming pools, rivers, creeks, dams and ponds. Smaller bodies of water, including nappy buckets, water containers, pet water bowls and poor drainage which allow water to collect can also present drowning hazards for young children.



SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- FUSE: www.fuse.education.vic.gov.au
- Kidsafe – Water Safety Fact Sheet: www.kidsafevic.com.au
- Life Saving Victoria - School Swimming and Water Safety Toolkit: www.lsv.com.au/toolkit/
- Royal Life Saving Society – Australia: www.royallifesaving.com.au
- Water Safety Victoria – Water Safety Guide: *Play it Safe by the Water*: <https://www.vic.gov.au/water-safety>

RELATED POLICIES

- Administration of First Aid
- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Emergency and Evacuation
- Excursions and Service Events
- Nutrition, Oral Health and Active Play
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Supervision of Children



EVALUATION

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

- seek feedback from people 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 service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).



ATTACHMENTS

- Nil



AUTHORISATION

This policy was confirmed by Sparkways on 09/02/2024

REVIEW DUE: February 2025
