WATER SAFETY POLICY

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to ma naging water safety including any activity involving water play, excursions near water, safety around hot water, and hygiene practices with water in the Service environment. Children will be actively supervised at all times during water play experiences to help keep children safe in and around water and support children's learning in a safe environment. Water safety education is embedded in the educational program to help children develop lifelong safety awareness.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
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.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS/EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
Sec. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Sec. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
25(1)(c)	Additional information about proposed education and care services premises
12	Meaning of a serious incident
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursions
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
126	Centre based services-general educator qualifications
168(2)(a)(iii)	Education and care service must have policies and procedures in relation to- Water safety, including safety during any water-based activities
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedure

176	Time to notify the certain information to the Regulatory Authority

ADVENTIST IDENTITY EARLY CHILDHOOD STANDARDS		
2.3	Promote and support children to honour Jesus by taking care of their health, safety, and wellbeing	Support children's faith development in a holistic, respectful, safe, and healthy environment.
		Teach children that they are created by God as unique and valued individuals and help them recognise and practice safe and healthy behaviours.
		Share with children that Jesus loves them and will always be with them.
		Nurture children's well-being and support personal care routines.
5.3	Build strong and Trusting relationships with children in a Christlike manner	Recognise and affirm that each child is a unique and valued child of God.
		Support and be inclusive of children with additional developmental needs and disabilities.

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Educational Program Policy Excursion/Incursion Policy	Health and Safety Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy Physical Environment Policy Sun Safety Policy Supervision Policy

PURPOSE

To ensure the safety and supervision of children in and around water. This includes water play, excursions near water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the Service environment.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, students, volunteers, and visitors (including contractors) of the Service.

DEFINITIONS

Adequate supervision: an educator can respond immediately when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation; knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently

Hazard: Situations or things that have the protentional to harm a person

Risk assessment: A systematic process of identifying hazards, assessing risks, and deciding on control measures to ensure children's safety

Water hazard: Any body of water that poses a threat of drowning risk to a child or children. This could include:

- large bodies of water- dams, rivers, creeks, dams, swimming pools, portable spas, fountains, water play troughs
- smaller bodies of water- baths, nappy buckets, containers that collect water, pet bowls.

Source: ACECQA Water Safety policy guidelines

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for managing water safety, including during any water-based activities and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.

According to Kidsafe, drowning is one of the leading causes of unintentional death for Australian children. Every year a number of children are killed and hundreds more rescued from near drowning situations. Non-fatal drowning incidents are also of great concern as they can have potential long-term effects, including brain damage and permanent disability.

The most common factor in childhood drowning is lack of supervision. A child can drown in as little as a few centimetres of water. Items such as nappy buckets, sinks, pet drinking bowls, ponds, pools, water features, water tanks are all potential drowning hazards. [source: Kidsafe]

Approved Provider/ Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible person will:

- adhere to all obligations under the Education and Care National Law and Regulations
- ensure educators, staff, students, and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- ensure all educators, staff and volunteers participate in a comprehensive induction that includes an understanding of child safety, CPR and our Water Safety Policy
- complete detailed risk management plans that identify and assess risks associated with any water hazards and water-based activities
- ensure adequate supervision is provided when participating in water activities including:
  - direct and constant monitoring of children
  - careful and intentional positioning of educators
  - scanning and moving around the environment
  - observing play and anticipating behaviour
  - ensuring higher adult to child ratios

  - ensuring no child is left unattended when in proximity to water
- provide direction and education to educators, staff, and families on the importance of children's safety and supervision in and around water
- ensure health and safety practices incorporate approaches to safe storage of water and water play
- ensure premises adjacent to or providing access to any water hazards that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times (e.g. dams, swimming pool) are to be isolated from children by a child-resistant barrier or fence
- ensure there are no items near fencing that children could climb up onto to gain access to a water hazard (pot plants, boxes, chairs)
- conduct a risk management plan in accordance with Reg. 101 prior to taking children on an excursion- consider any water hazards and any risks associated with water-based activities before an excursion/incursion is approved
- ensure at least one educator who holds current approved first aid qualifications, that was attained within the previous three years (Reg. 136), is in attendance at the Service at all times
- ensure at least one educator has successfully completed cardiopulmonary resuscitation training (CPR) each year, is in attendance at the Service at all times
- display a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) guide near any swimming pool, wading pool, or body of water
- ensure hot water is inaccessible to children, including hot drinks accessed by educators, staff, or families
- notify parents as soon as practicable but within **24 hours** if their child is involved in an incident/accident at the Service or while under Service care
- ensure details of the incident/accident will be recorded on an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Records*
- notify the Nominated Supervisor as soon as possible who will contact the regulatory authority within **24 hours** of becoming aware of a serious incident
- conduct a review of practices following any water-related safety incident including an assessment of areas for improvement within the policy and associated procedure.

Educators will:

- provide active supervision when children are participating in water activities including:
  - supervise children near water at all times
  - never leave children alone near any water
  - direct and constant monitoring of children

  - scanning and moving around the environment
  - observing play and anticipating behaviour
- ensure children in a bath (if required) are
  - directly supervised at all times; and
  - remain within an arm's reach of an educator
- ensure that any body of water with a depth greater than **3cm** is inaccessible to children at all times and is guarded with an effective barrier at all times (child proof fence/ grate over the water)
- complete a daily Outdoor Cleaning and Safety Check of premises to ensure that all hazards are known and minimised. When a hazard or potential hazard is detected, educators will complete a risk management plan to address any concerns and children will be excluded from the area until the hazard has been rectified
- utilise water activities in appropriate weather as part of the planned program
- allow the children the opportunity to experiment with water, sand, and mixing materials.
- incorporate water safety awareness into the educational program
- monitor all taps on the premises that children have access to and ensure they are turned off securely when not in use
- safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers, e.g. mop buckets, nappy buckets
- empty wading pools immediately after every use and store to prevent the collection of water, e.g., upright
- check for and empty any water that has collected in holes or containers after rainfall or watering gardens
- ensure water troughs are not used without a stand to keep it off the ground
- ensure children remain standing on the ground whilst using the water trough
- ensure buckets of water for soaking toys or clothing are inaccessible to children
- ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level and emptied into the garden areas after each use
- discourage children from drinking from any water activities for health and safety
- ensure laundry, storerooms, and educator areas are to have signs on doors to remind adults to close doors behind them
- teach children about staying safe in and around water as part of the educational program
- ensure wading pools are hygienically cleaned, disinfected appropriately:

- on a daily basis remove leaves and debris, hose away surface dirt and scrub inside with disinfectant
- wash away disinfectant before filling pool
- children with diarrhoea, upset stomach, open sores or nasal infections should not use the pool
- all children should wear appropriate swimwear / bathers, go to the toilet before entering the pool, and follow correct toilet hygiene practices while in the pool
- remove all children immediately, empty and disinfect the pool should a child pass a bowel motion whilst in the pool
- empty the wading pool at the end of each use

- follow emergency procedures and contact emergency Services if a child appears to be missing or unaccounted for or is involved in a serious incident or accident
- follow the *Administration of First Aid Policy* after any incident involving a water-based activity, including contacting 000 if a child is found unresponsive or has inhaled water
- reflect on practice and share strategies during staff meetings to maintain and improve child safety around water.

OPERATIONAL SAFETY

- water tanks will be labelled with "Do Not Drink" signage and the children will be supervised in this area to make sure they are not accessing this water for drinking.
- educators will discuss with the children the use of water tank water and how it differs from drinking water.
- hot water accessible to children will be maintained at the temperature of **45.C°** which will be tested annually. (Australian standard AS 3498)
- hot drinks **are not** to be consumed near children by educators, students, or visitors
- water for pets at the Service must be changed daily and only be accessible to children when educators are present.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Water Safety Policy* will be updated and reviewed annually or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or after a water-related incident. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within **14 days**.

RELATED RESOURCES

Outdoor Cleaning and Safety Checklist	Water Safety Procedure

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). Policy and procedure guidelines- *Water Safety Guidelines*
Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023)
KidSafe (2021). Water Safety. https://kidsafe.com.au/water-safety/
Royal Life Saving Society Australia Toddler drowning prevention
https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/families/at-home/toddler-drowning-prevention
Victoria Government. Better Health Channel. Water safety for children.

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	KAREN PETRIE	POSITION	PROJECT OFFICER EARLY CHILDHOOD
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	SEPTEMBER 2026
VERSION NUMBER	• V12.09.25		
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy maintenance • added- definitions, induction of staff/educators/review of practices following any water related incident • removal of any reference to use of chlorine in service (hazardous material) • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
SEPTEMBER 2024	• annual policy maintenance - no major changes to policy • minor formatting edits within text • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required		SEPTEMBER 2025