

Water Safety

POLICY STATEMENT:

SHARE will plan experiences with appropriate levels of challenge where children will be encouraged to explore, experiment and take appropriate risks ("My Time, Our Place", Outcome 4), including the use of water as a medium for play in both the outdoor and indoor environment and on excursions.

Water use will be supervised at all times to ensure the safety of children is a priority. The hygienic state of water will be assessed before it is used for children's play. Drinking water will be accessible, hygienically stored and maintained.

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to water play, excursions near or at bodies of water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the service environment.

PROCEDURES:

Definition of a body of water

The service recognises the following locations as bodies of water:

- Swimming pools and /or water fun parks
- Wading pools
- Lakes
- Ponds
- The sea / ocean
- Creeks
- Dams
- Rivers
- Equipment used by the service that could contain 5cm or more of water and would allow a child to submerge both nose and mouth at the same time.

a) Water Safety in relation to excursions

SHARE recognises the risks posed by bodies of water and will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children are able to enjoy water-based excursions safely. Risk assessments will be carried out for programed water-bases activities. (r101) Authorisation from families will be sought prior to excursions including those involving water-based activities.

The National Law and Regulations do not specify a specific educator to child ratio for activities where water is a feature, the recommended excursion ratio of 1:8 is considered best practice and this may need to be adjusted should the water be risk assessed to pose a higher hazard such as unfenced water areas, areas where there will be a large group of children etc., A ratio of 1:5 is recommended for excursions where children are swimming and entering the water.

Children on excursion involving water (swimming, water sliding, beach play) are to wear the Fluro **Pink** high visibility rash vests supplied by the service. **Pink** is the colour recommend by the Australian surf Life Saving association and is easily seen in bodies of water. Educators are to wear the Fluro **green** rash vests supplied by the service.

It must also be noted that in sections 165, 167 and 169 of the National Law there are clear statements about adequate supervision. A range of factors shall determine the adequacy of supervision, including:

- Numbers, ages and abilities of the children

- Number and positioning of educators
- Each child’s current activity
- Areas where children are playing, in particular the visibility and accessibility of these areas
- Risks in the environment and experiences provided to children
- Educators’ knowledge of each child and each group of children,
- The experience, knowledge and skill of each educator.

(b) Water safety in relation to water-based activities within the service

- Water use within **SHARE** will be supervised to ensure that the safety of children and educators is a priority. The hygienic state of water will be assessed before it is used for children’s play.
- At the completion of the activity the water containers will be emptied and the containers turned upside down or packed away. Educators will ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level. Children will be discouraged from drinking from these water vessels.
- Children will be instructed in the safe use of equipment used during water-based activities, for example, slip and slide, water pistols, bubble machines, etc.
- Any buckets of water that may be used for cleaning or hand washing will not be left unsupervised near the children and will be emptied immediately after use
- The children’s play areas will be checked each morning to ensure that no containers or pools of water are accessible to children. If rain occurs during the day, outdoor play areas will be checked for safety prior to the children entering the outdoor environment.
- Any water-based activities should be undertaken on grassed areas when possible to minimise wasted water.
- Educators will reinforce the water conservation message to embed sustainability practices in children
- Water restrictions will be taken into consideration when planning and programming water-based activities

CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service policies/ documentation	Other
S165, 167.R100 101, 102, 168	Standard 1.2,2.2. 3.2 Element 1.2.1 2.2.1 3.2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a Child Safe Environment policy • Excursion policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Time, Our Place. • Work, Health & Safety Act 2011. • Risk Assessments • Safety checks • Authorisation records • Local water board

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

Approval date: Date for Review: