

Preschool Procedure

Providing a child safe environment



Current	Term 3 2020
Next Review	Term 3 2021
Regulation(s)	R. 82, 83, 84, 115, 122, 123, 271
National Quality Standard(s)	2.2.1: At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard 2.2.3 Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect. 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.
Relevant DoE Policy and link	Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People Policy PD/20020067/V02 Work Health and Safety (WHS) Policy PD/2013/0454/V01 Child Protection Policy Guidelines
Relevant School Procedure	
DoE Leading and Operating Department Preschools Guidelines	Safety p39 Child Protection p49
Key Resources	Appendix 1 Kid Safe Sandpits https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/child-protection-policy-responding-to-and-reporting-students-at-risk-of-harm?refid=285835

- daily safety checks of the environment and equipment are taken and recorded
- there is a process for reporting required maintenance to the general assistant (or principal if urgent)
- the removal of broken or hazardous equipment from areas accessible to children
- secure, labelled storage of hazardous products such as cleaning materials and chemicals in the kitchen
- cleaning schedule is available to view on the glass wall within the kitchen.
- doors and gates secured to prevent children entering areas unsupervised, for example, storerooms, staff toilet
- implementation by all staff of current preschool procedures related to health and safety
- hot water is inaccessible to children
- the intentional teaching and positive reinforcement of safe play and the safe use of equipment
- electrical outlets covered with safety fittings

- adult-size equipment or tools only accessible to children under direct supervision, for example, large scissors, knives for cutting fruit
- heavy objects or furniture positioned in a way that children can't pull them down
- climbing equipment more than 60cm tall placed over cushioning or soft fall
- the sandpit is inspected daily and regular maintenance occurs. The sand is raked over daily to remove debris and replenished when the sand level drops 100mm below the top edge of the sandpit. The sand pit is covered at the end of the day.
- clear, accessible exit routes
- any equipment or furniture being purchased meeting the relevant Australian Standard
- whole school tree inspections by qualified professionals
- hazardous garbage inaccessible to children, for example, used nappies, broken glass are placed in rubbish bins in the kitchen or staff bathroom.
- development of risk assessments for:
 - the general preschool environment (indoors and outdoors)
 - visits into the school
 - evacuation from the preschool
 - potential emergency situations
 - excursions and regular outings
 - individual children with a medical condition
- potentially hazardous products such as cleaning chemicals and aerosol cans are always locked away in a cupboard clearly labelled with a sign to identify what is stored. A copy of the materials safety data sheet is stored in the preschool.
- Fire extinguishers and a fire blanket is located in the foyer of the front entrance and maintained yearly.
- Educators understand their role as "mandatory reporters".

Child Protection

Responsibilities

Principal

Training

- ensure all staff have participated in an initial child protection induction and an update during the past year.
- ensure all staff are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect of children and young people.
- ensure all staff are aware of their obligation to advise the principal or workplace manager of concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people that arise during the course of their work.
- ensure that all staff are aware of their mandatory obligation to report suspected risk of significant harm and of the procedures for doing so.

Reporting

- use appropriate tools to inform decision making, such as the online Mandatory Reporter Guide, professional judgment or specialist advice, where there are concerns about risk of harm.
- determine whether concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of children or young people constitute risk of significant harm and, if they do, report these to Family and Community Services.
- seek advice from the Child Wellbeing Unit where there is uncertainty about whether concerns amount to risk of significant harm.
- contact the Child Wellbeing Unit about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people where:
 - there are concerns about risk of harm, that do not meet the threshold of significant harm but are not trivial.
 - the Mandatory Reporter Guide indicates this should be done.
 - a case has been reported to Family and Community Services and did not meet the risk of significant harm threshold.
 - there is an observable pattern of cumulative harm that does not meet the threshold of significant harm.

Supporting children and young people

- establish effective systems in their workplace for:
 - child protection concerns to be identified in the course of the work of staff, reported and action taken, where appropriate, so vulnerable children and young people are supported.
 - reasonable steps to be taken to coordinate decision making and coordinate services to children and young people and their families with other local service providers, if required.
 - collaborative work with other agencies for the care and protection of children and young people in ways that strengthen and support the family and in a manner that respects the functions and expertise of each service provider.
 - exchange relevant information to progress assessments, investigations and case management as permitted by law.
 - use best endeavours in responding to a request for a service from Family and Community Services provided that the request is consistent with departmental responsibilities and policies.

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements

- Principals and workplace managers must maintain a workplace register of staff participation in annual updates and of inductions of new staff, or they must sight individual records of staff inductions. This applies to all staff including non-teaching staff, part-time, temporary and casual staff.
- A record is to be kept of reports to Family and Community Services as confirmation that mandatory reporting requirements have been met. The report reference number should be recorded.
- The record and related papers are to be retained by principals or workplace managers in secure storage and kept confidential. These records are to be provided to any successor.
- Where a reference number has been provided by the Child Wellbeing Unit it must be recorded and kept.
- If serious safety issues remain after a report has been made to, and accepted by, Family and Community Services, principals or workplace managers will refer the matter to the departmental regional officer responsible for student services so the case can be taken up at a senior level within Family and Community Services.

All Employees

Training

- participate in a child protection induction and in annual updates. This includes all staff – principals, workplace managers, teaching and non-teaching staff, part-time, temporary and casual staff and those who join during the year

Reporting

- adhere to mandatory procedures for conveying risk of harm concerns to the principal or workplace manager.
- adhere to mandatory procedures for reporting risk of significant harm to Family and Community Services.
- ensure, where they have reported any risk of significant harm concerns to the principal or workplace manager, that the principal or workplace manager has reported those concerns to Family and Community Services.
- report directly to Family and Community Services if they believe the principal or workplace manager has not reported risk of significant harm concerns to Family and Community Services, and they still have concerns about risk of significant harm.
- ensure that any relevant information that they become aware of, subsequent to a report being made to Family and Community Services or following contact with the Child Wellbeing Unit, is provided to Family and Community Services or the Child Wellbeing Unit respectively. If the additional information forms concerns about risk of significant harm a report must be made to Family and Community Services.

Supporting children and young people

- cooperate with reasonable steps to coordinate service delivery and decision-making with other relevant service providers.
- avoid undertaking any investigation of the circumstances giving rise to a report where risk of significant harm has been reported, without the express prior approval of the relevant Family and Community Services case officer.
- inform students, including apprentices or trainees, of their right to be protected from abuse and of avenues of support if they have concerns about abuse.