

# WATER SAFETY

## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

*Our service* 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 to ensure 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. Drinking water will be accessible but hygienically stored and maintained.

Children will wear sun smart clothing for a water based activity, for example, hats and rash shirt for swimming or extended outdoor play eg. slip and slide and educators will role model the same effective sun smart behavior, including seeking shade and encourage the children to do the same.

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to water play within the service, excursions near or at bodies of water whether the children are entering the water or not, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the service environment. Children will be adequately supervised at all times during water play experiences.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **a) Water Safety in relation to excursions**

The service recognises the risks posed by bodies of water. The service 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 programmed water-based excursions.

Whilst the 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. 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:

- 1 Numbers, ages and abilities of the children
- 2 Number and positioning of educators
- 3 Each child's current activity
- 4 Areas where children are playing, in particular the visibility and accessibility of these areas
- 5 Risks in the environment and experiences provided to children
- 6 Educators' knowledge of each child and each group of children, the experience, knowledge and skill of each educator.

A risk management plan will be undertaken for all excursions near or at bodies of water. Please refer to the service's Excursion Policy.

## **Definition of a body of water**

The service recognises the following locations are bodies of water:

- 1 Swimming pools and /or water fun parks
- 2 Wading pools
- 3 Lakes
- 4 Ponds
- 5 The sea / ocean
- 6 Creeks
- 7 Dams
- 8 Rivers
- 9 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.

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

- 1 Water use within the service 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.
- 2 At the completion of the activity the water containers will be emptied and the containers turned upside down or packed away.
- 3 Educators will ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level. These activities will be supervised at all times by adults and containers or troughs will be emptied onto garden areas after use. Children will be discouraged from drinking from these water vessels.
- 4 Children will be instructed in the safe use of equipment used during water-based activities, for example, slip and slide, water "guns", bubble machines, etc.
- 5 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.
- 6 The children's play areas will be checked each morning to ensure that no containers or pools of water are accessible for children. If rain occurs during the day, outdoor play areas will be checked for safety prior to the children entering the outdoor environment.

## **CONSIDERATIONS:**

<b>Education and Care Services National Law &amp; Regulations</b>	<b>National Quality Standards &amp; Elements</b>	<b>Links to other Service Policies</b>	<b>Other Documentation/ Evidence</b>
S165, 167  R99, 100, 101, 102, 168	Standard 2.2  Element 2.2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing a Child Safe Environment policy</li><li>• Excursion policy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• My Time, Our Place.</li><li>• Work, Health &amp; Safety Act 2011.</li><li>• Risk Assessments</li><li>• Safety Checks</li><li>• Authorisation Records</li></ul>

## **ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:**

**Approval Date: April 2019**

**Date for Review: April 2022**