



**Mandatory – Quality Area 2**

## **Water Safety**

### **1. Authorisation**

This policy was adopted by the Committee of Armadale Early Learning Centre Inc. at its Committee meeting on [11<sup>th</sup> of June, 2013](#).

### **2. Review Date**

This policy was reviewed on [June 2013](#). This policy is to be reviewed every [3 years](#) or when deemed necessary. This policy is due to be reviewed [June 2016](#).

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, carers, children and others attending the programs and activities of AELC, including during offsite excursions and activities.

### **4. Background and Legislations**

#### **4.1 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 children's curiosity and imagination. It can also be relaxing and calming play. 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.

Water safety relates to access to water in the building, the playground or on excursions, and also to the availability of drinking water for children. The educators at AELC ensure that fresh water drinks are always available for the children. The students are encouraged to bring their own drink bottles to kindergarten.

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.

It is a requirement that all educators at AELC are trained and qualified in First Aid.

#### **4.2 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*: Section 167
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 101(2), 168(2)(a)(iii)
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
  - Standard 2.3: Each child is protected
    - Element 2.3.2: Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury

### **5. Definitions**

**Adequate supervision:** supervision entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate Supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- number, age and abilities of children
- number and positioning of educators
- current activity of each child
- areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)

- developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

**Approved first aid qualification:** A list of approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management training is published on the ACECQA website: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

**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.

**Notifiable incident:** An incident involving workplace health and safety that is required by law to be reported to WorkSafe Victoria. Notification is required for incidents that result in death or serious injury/illness, or dangerous occurrences. For a complete list of incidents that must be reported to WorkSafe Victoria, refer to the *Guide to Incident Notification* on the WorkSafe Victoria website: [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)

**Serious incident:** An incident resulting in the death of a child, or an injury, trauma or illness for which the attention of a registered medical practitioner, emergency services or hospital is sought or should have been sought. This also includes an incident in which a child appears to be missing, cannot be accounted for, is removed from the service in contravention of the Regulations or is mistakenly locked in/out of the service premises (Regulation 12). A serious incident should be documented in an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* (refer to AELC Policy Folder) as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident. The Regulatory Authority (DEECD) must be notified within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the service (Regulation 176(2)(a)) on [ph: 03 8765 5787](tel:0387655787). Records are required to be retained for the periods specified in Regulation 183.

Written notification of complaints must be submitted using the appropriate forms, which can be found on the ACECQA website:

[http://www.acecqa.gov.au/Uploads/files/Applications%20Forms/Notifications/1-SI01\\_NotificationOfSeriousIncident\\_v4.pdf](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/Uploads/files/Applications%20Forms/Notifications/1-SI01_NotificationOfSeriousIncident_v4.pdf)

**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 allows water to collect can also present drowning hazards for young children.

## **6. Policy**

### **6.1 Values**

AELC is committed to:

- 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

- teaching children the importance of not wasting water to care for our environment, that water is a precious commodity
- providing information to educators, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and others at the service about water safety

## **6.2 Purpose**

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

## **7. Procedures**

Please refer to Section 8 – *Key Responsibilities & Authorities*.

## **8. Key Responsibilities & Authorities**

### **8.1 Approved Provider**

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ensuring that children are adequately supervised at all times when near water hazards
- ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times (*Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Sections 169(1)&(3), *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 123, 355, 357, 360)
- conducting a risk assessment in relation to any water hazards on or near the premises that may be accessible to children
- ensuring permission is obtained from parents/guardians for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard
- ensuring that water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other offsite events (Regulation 101)
- ensuring increased levels of supervision for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)
- conducting a regular safety check of the service premises
- ensuring any water hazards that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times are isolated from children by a child-resistant barrier or fence (particularly large bodies of water including swimming pools, rivers, ponds etc.)
- ensuring that an educator with a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance and immediately available at all times children are being educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 136)
- ensuring that details of current approved first aid qualifications are filed with each staff member's record
- reporting serious incidents to DEECD
- reporting notifiable incidents to WorkSafe Victoria

- ensuring that water safety awareness is embedded in the curriculum
- providing current information to parents about water safety.

## **8.2 Nominated Supervisor**

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- assisting the Approved Provider to implement the *Water Safety Policy*
- ensuring parents/guardians are informed of the *Water Safety Policy* on enrolment
- ensuring information on water safety (refer to *Sources*) is incorporated into the educational program
- ensuring that children are adequately supervised and protected from hazards and harm at all times
- ensuring that water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other offsite events (Regulations 100, 101)
- ensuring permission is obtained from parents/guardians for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard
- ensuring increased levels of supervision for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard
- ensuring that an educator with a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance and immediately available at all times children are being educated and cared for by the service
- ensuring that all educators' current approved first aid qualifications meet the requirements of the National Regulations and are approved by ACECQA
- informing the Approved Provider immediately if any serious or notifiable incidents occur at the service.

## **8.3 Certified Supervisors and educators**

Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:

- children are closely supervised at all times when engaged in water activities of any kind
- undertaking a risk assessment prior to an excursion to a location where there is a significant water hazard
- obtaining parental permission for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard
- maintaining a current approved first aid qualification
- having rules for water play, and teaching children how to be responsible
- using fresh water for water play to ensure cleanliness
- being aware of children in the bathroom
- emptying water from water play activities at the end of each day (or sessions as appropriate) and that the water containers are stored in a manner that prevents the collection of water when not in use
- checking the outdoor learning environment at the beginning and end of each

day for puddles or filled containers that could pose a potential risk to small children after heavy rain

- providing water safety education as a part of the service's program
- informing the Approved Provider immediately if any serious or notifiable incidents occur at the service.

#### **8.4 Parents/guardians**

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- supervising children in their care, including siblings, while attending or assisting at the service
- ensuring that doors, gates and barriers, including playground gates, are closed after entry or exit to prevent access to water hazards
- informing themselves about water safety
- ensuring their children understand the risks associated with water
- recognising when resuscitation is required and obtaining assistance
- considering undertaking approved first aid qualifications, as resuscitation skills save lives.

**Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

### **9. Circulation Plan**

Who needs to know the policy and procedures exists?

- Parents whose children attend the AELC
- Staff and Committee members

#### **9.1 Method**

A copy of the Policy will be adopted by the Committee and will be available upon request, in the Policy Manual (located in the AELC foyer), and available on the AELC website [www.armadaleelc.vic.edu.au](http://www.armadaleelc.vic.edu.au).

### **10. Resources and Support**

#### **10.1 Sources**

- Royal Life Saving Society – Australia: [www.royallifesaving.com.au](http://www.royallifesaving.com.au)
- Water Safety Victoria – Water Safety Guide: *Play it Safe by the Water* [www.watersafety.vic.gov.au](http://www.watersafety.vic.gov.au)
- Kidsafe – Water Safety Fact Sheet: [www.kidsafevic.com.au](http://www.kidsafevic.com.au)

#### **10.2 Service policies**

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*

- *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- *Nutrition and Active Play Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

## **11. Evaluation**

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

- regularly seek feedback from educators, staff, parents/guardians, children, management and all 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
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

## **12. Attachments**

Nil

<b>Date Reviewed</b>	<b>Details of Changes (if any)</b>	<b>Date of Next Review</b>