

Yarram Early Learning Emergency and Evacuation Policy

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

PURPOSE

This policy provides a framework for:

- the development of specific emergency and evacuation procedures, practices and guidelines of Yarram Early Learning
- raising the awareness of everyone attending Yarram Early Learning about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.

POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Yarram Early Learning is committed to:

- providing a safe environment for all children, staff and persons participating in programs at Yarram Early Learning
- having a plan to manage emergency situations in a way that reduces risk to those present on the premises
- ensuring effective procedures are in place to manage emergency incidents at the service
- ensuring an appropriate response during and following emergency incidents to meet the needs of the children, their families, staff and others at the service.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Yarram Early Learning, including during offsite excursions and activities.

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* define an emergency in relation to an education and care service as any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the service premises e.g. flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down.

Yarram Early Learning has policies and procedures in place detailing what needs to be done in an emergency, including a comprehensive emergency management includes prevention, preparedness, response and recovery and an emergency and evacuation floor plan. Emergency and evacuation policies and procedures are based on risk assessments that identify potential emergencies relevant to the service (Regulation 97).

Early childhood services have a duty of care to the children, staff, volunteers, students, visitors and contractors. It is also a requirement under the Occupational

Health and Safety Act 2004 that employees provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs. All services in Victoria are required to have an Emergency Management Plan (EMP) as part of their everyday 'best practice' operations. All education and care services listed on the Department of Education and Training (DET)'s Bushfire At-Risk Register are required as a condition of their service approval to submit their EMP to their regional office annually. DET provides Emergency Management Plan Guidelines and an Emergency Management Plan template to assist services develop and review their EMP (refer to sources for link). All services must complete the required sections of the plan and lodge it with relevant DET regional office. A copy should also be attached to this policy.

On being advised to evacuate for any other reason, staff members, parents and students on duty, stop all activities immediately and gather children together. Staff have designated positions at the head and rear of the line and children are evacuated via the nearest safe exit to the selected assembly area where a roll call is carried out. If safe to do so, the doors to the kindergarten are closed after checking the bathrooms, staff room, kitchen, gallery and offices prior to leaving the building.

ASSEMBLY AREAS

ASSEMBLY AREAS vary according to the Type and Emergency Code (refer to EMP)

Primary On-Site Assembly Point is located in the **Yarram Early Learning, two assembly points are outside the babies' room at the perimeter fence and outside the kinder room at the perimeter fence. Evacuation Coordinator (Warden) will make the call depending on the location of the emergency/incident.**

If these areas become untenable due to smoke or other problems, then the *Primary Off-Site Assembly Point* is used.

Primary off-Sites Assembly Point

- Yarram Tennis Courts
- secondary is the Yarram Primary School.

Lock down Site. In the event of an external threat to the centre a lock down will be enacted. All blinds will be pulled down. Children and staff in babies and toddler room will move to Maternal Welfare room. Three and four year old room will move to corridor leading to four year older kinder room and remain below window level. Staff to turn phones on silent.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 97, 98, 168(2)(e)
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Standard 2.2: Each child is protected
- Element 2.2.2 – Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

Attendance record: Kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering

and collecting the child or of the Nominated Supervisor or educator (Regulation 158(1)).

Country Fire Authority (CFA): CFA respond to a variety of fire and emergency incidents. They are also involved in a range of other activities including:

- fire safety building inspections
- delivering community awareness, education and safety programs
- post-incident analysis and fire investigation
- fire prevention planning and land use planning at a municipal level.

Duty of care: A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

Emergency: Includes any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the education and care service premises e.g. flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down (National Regulations, page 5).

Emergency Management Plan (EMP): A written set of instructions to assist the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and staff to deal with incidents or situations that could pose a threat to life, health or property. *Emergency Management Plan Guidelines* and an *Emergency Management Plan* template are available on the DEECD website (refer to Sources below).

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

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record: Contains details of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs while the child is being educated and cared for by the service. Any incident, injury, trauma or illness must be recorded as soon as is practicable but not later than 24 hours after the occurrence.

These details must be kept for the period of time specified in Regulation 183. A sample *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is available on the ACECQA website. www.acecqa.gov.au (search forms and template).

Mandatory closure: When services identified as being at high bushfire risk are directed by DET to close on days declared a **CODE RED** Fire Danger Rating day.

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

Planned closure: Services identified as being at high fire risk and on the DET's Bushfire at-Risk Register will close on days determined to have a fire danger rating of **CODE RED** by the emergency management commissioner. Where possible, four to seven days' notice of a planned closure will be provided. Services not on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register will remain open, unless directly threatened by fire or another emergency.

Risk management: A structured approach to managing uncertainty related to a threat; a sequence of activities including the identification, assessment and prioritisation of risks followed by co-ordinated and economical application of resources to minimise, monitor and control the probability and/or impact of those risks.

Serious incident: A serious incident (regulation 12) is defined as any of the following:

- Death of a child while being educated and care for at the service or following an incident at the service.
- Any incident involving serious injury or trauma while the child is being educated and cared for, which
 - a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or
 - the child attending or ought reasonably to have attended a hospital e.g. a broken limb.
- Any incident involving serious illness of a child while that child is being educated and cared for by the service for which the child attended ought reasonably to have attended a hospital e.g. asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis.

NOTE: in some cases (for example, rural and remote locations) a GP conducts a consultation from the hospital site. Only treatment related to serious injury or illness or trauma are required to be notified, not other health matters.

- Any emergency for which emergency serviced attended. NOTE: This means an incident, situation or event where there is an imminent or severe risk to health, safety or wellbeing for a person/s at an education and care services. It does not mean an incident where emergency services attend as precaution.
- A child appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for at the service.
- A child appears to have been taken or removed from the service in a manner that contravenes the National Regulations.
- A child was mistakenly locked in or out of the service premises or any part of the premises.

Examples of serious incidents include amputation (e.g. removal of fingers), anaphylactic reaction requiring hospitalisation, asthma reaction requiring hospitalisation, broken bone/fractures, bronchiolitis, burns, diarrhoea requiring hospitalisation, epileptic seizures, head injuries, measles, meningococcal infection, sexual assault, witnessing violence or a frightening event.

State Emergency Service (SES): Volunteer-based organisation responding to emergencies and working to ensure the safety of communities around Victoria.

State of emergency: A situation in which the government is granted special powers, by constitutional or legal provision, to deal with a perceived threat to law and order, or public safety.

WorkSafe Victoria: The manager of Victoria's workplace safety system WorkSafe Victoria's responsibilities are to:

- strives to prevent workplace injuries, illness and fatalities
- provide benefits to injured workers and help them return to work
- enforce Victoria's occupational health and safety laws
- provide reasonably priced workplace injury insurance for employers
- provide an emergency response service 24 hours a day.

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Australian Standards: Planning for emergencies in facilities (AS 3745-2010) available from https://infostore.saiglobal.com/en-au/standards/as-3745-2010-amdt-2-2018-122637_saig_as_as_281639/
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, *Emergency Management Plan Guidelines* and *Emergency Management Plan*: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/emergencymanagementrequirements.aspx>
- Metropolitan Fire Brigade: www.mfb.vic.gov.au
- Country Fire Authority: www.cfa.vic.gov.au
- State Emergency Service: www.ses.vic.gov.au
- WorkSafe Victoria: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

SERVICE POLICIES

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Administration of Medication Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for the following:

- Completing the DET *Emergency Management Plan* (refer to *Sources* for the link), lodging this with the relevant DEECD regional office and attaching a copy to this policy (Attachment 1).
- Conducting a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that the service may encounter (Regulation 97(2)) (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Developing instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency (Regulation 97(1)(a)) (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Appointing an Incident Management Team (IMT) to oversee safety at the service in the event of an emergency (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Developing an emergency and evacuation floor plan (Regulation 97(1)(b)) (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Ensuring that a copy of the emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions are displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the service premises. (regulation 97(4)).
- Ensuring that the emergency and evacuation procedures are rehearsed at least once every 3 months by all at the service (Regulation 97(3)(a)).
- Ensuring that the rehearsals of the emergency and evacuation procedures are documented (Regulation 97(3)(b)) (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Ensuring that those working at, or attending the service, have access to a phone or similar for immediate communication with parents/guardians and emergency services (Regulation 98), and that phone numbers of emergency services are displayed.

- Identifying potential onsite hazards and taking action to manage and minimise risk (refer to Attachment 1 *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Ensuring all infrastructure and service equipment are regularly checked for condition and maintenance, including emergency exit lighting.
- Ensuring the location of first aid kits, fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment are clearly signposted.
- Ensuring all emergency equipment is maintained on a regular basis in accordance with requirements specified by regulations, such as the Australian Standards Building Code e.g. Fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, evacuation kits, sprinkler systems and alarm or duress systems.
- Providing a fully-equipped portable first aid kit (refer to *Administration of First Aid Policy*) developing a regular training schedule for staff to ensure that they are able to deal with emergency situations e.g. First aid, emergency management and OHS training.
- Keeping lock-down areas in a state of readiness so they are safe for children, staff and visitors to be used.
- Regularly reviewing, evaluating and updating emergency management plans, manuals and procedures (at least annually or following an emergency incident).
- Developing procedures to debrief staff following emergency incidents.
- Conducting spot checks of documentation and practices to ensure all requirements of this policy are being complied with.
- Developing a regular training schedule for staff to ensure that they are able to deal with emergency situations e.g. first aid, emergency management and OHS training.
- Notifying DEECD in writing within 24 hours of a serious incident (refer to *Definitions*).
- Completing the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* (refer to *Definitions*) where required.
- Notifying DET within 7 days of an incident that required the service to be closed, or a circumstance that posed a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child attending the service (National Law: Section 174(2)(c); Regulations: 175(2)(b)&(c), 176).
- Reporting notifiable incidents (refer to definitions) in the workplace to WorkSafe Victoria.
- Engaging with the Country Fire Authority regarding fire safety awareness and training for the service, including demonstrations of fire equipment, basic fire safety, smoke alarm, fire blankets and escape plans.
- Identifying staff and children requiring additional assistance in the event of an emergency (refer to Attachment 1 *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Ensuring that emergency contact details are provided on each child's enrolment form and that these are kept up to date.
- Ensuring that an attendance record (refer to *Definitions*) is maintained to account for all children attending the service.
- Keeping a written record of all visitors to the service, including time of arrival and departure.
- Ensuring all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers and students on placement understand the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.
- Ensuring there are induction procedures in place to inform new staff, including casual or relief staff, of the emergency and evacuation policy and procedures.

- Ensuring all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers, students on placement and others attending the service are accounted for in the event of an evacuation.
- Developing procedures to deal with loss of critical functions, such as power/water shut off.

The Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that the emergency and evacuation floor plan is displayed in prominent positions and that all parents/guardians, volunteers, contract staff and relief staff are briefed and aware of the procedures.
- Ensuring that children are adequately supervised at all times and protected from hazards and harm (refer to Supervision of Children Policy).
- Ensuring that the Emergency Management Plan (attached) is followed in the event of an emergency.
- Testing alarms and communication systems regularly, such as on a monthly basis.
- Informing the Approved Provider of any serious or notifiable incidents (refer to Definitions) that must be reported to DET or Worksafe Victoria.

The Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor and staff are responsible for the following:

- Implementing the procedures and responsibilities in this policy and the service's Emergency Management Plan (Attachment 1).
- Supervising the children in their care and protecting them from hazards and harm (refer to Supervision of Children Policy).
- Providing support to children before, during and after emergencies.
- Checking that the attendance record (refer to Definitions) is completed at the beginning and end of each session.
- Checking that the emergency evacuation procedure is displayed in prominent positions and that all attending the service are made aware of these (refer to Attachment 1 Emergency Management Plan).
- Rehearsing emergency evacuation procedures with the children at least once every 3 months (or more often, as required) and ensuring that these are documented (refer to Attachment 1 Emergency Management Plan).
- Providing feedback regarding the effectiveness of emergency and evacuation procedures to inform policy, procedures and manuals etc.
- Completing the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record, as required.
- Informing the Approved Provider about any serious incidents or notifiable incidents (refer to Definitions) at the service.
- Attending first aid, emergency management and OHS training, as required.
- Communicating with parents about emergency procedures.
- Raising children's awareness about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.

Parents/guardians are responsible for the following:

- Being aware of the service's Emergency and Evacuation policy and procedures and the service's Emergency Management Plan (Attachment 1).

- Ensuring they complete the attendance record (refer to Definitions) on delivery and collection of their children (refer to Delivery and Collection of Children Policy).
- Providing emergency contact details on their child's enrolment form and ensuring that this is kept up to date.
- Reinforcing the service's emergency and evacuation procedures with their child.
- Following the directions of staff in the event of an emergency or when rehearsing emergency procedures.
- Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

EVALUATION

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

- review the policy to determine whether it adequately addresses a range of potential emergency situations
- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness particularly following an emergency
- assess the ability of the Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor, staff, children and others to follow the policy and procedures in the event of an emergency
- review procedures, including evacuation procedures, to determine their effectiveness, including timing and processes
- use information gained from spot checks and the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record to inform proposed changes to this policy
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required by legislation, research, policy and best practice
- consult with emergency services such as the CFA, to ensure the policy and procedures meet current best practices
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the Yarram Early Learning Incorporated in March 2023

To be reviewed: March 2025