



Water Safety

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WATER SAFETY

DIVISION: Sport, Community and Activation

BRANCH: Community Outcomes - Family Day Care

CATEGORY: 3

PART 1 – INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Children's safety and wellbeing is paramount for our Service. According to Kidsafe (the recognised authority on the prevention of injuries in children), drowning continues to be one of the main causes of fatalities of Australian children. Every year a number of children are killed and hundreds more are rescued from near drowning situations. Non-fatal drowning incidents are also of great concern as they can have potential long-term effects, including brain damage and permanent disability.
- 1.2 The most common factor in childhood drowning is lack of supervision. A child can drown in as little as a few centimetres of water. Items such as nappy buckets, sinks, pet drinking bowls, ponds, pools, water features and water tanks are potential drowning hazards.
- 1.3 The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require Approved Providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for managing water safety, including safety during any water-based activities.

2. OBJECTIVE

- 2.1 Water safety policies and procedures help keep children safe in and around water and support children's learning in a safe environment. Children's safety and wellbeing will be protected in and around water through supervision and education.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to:
 - Camden Council Family Day Care (FDC) Service.
 - Camden Council FDC staff employed by Camden Council.
 - FDC educators (including educator assistants and relief educators) registered with the Service as agents of the Approved Provider- Camden Council.
 - Children enrolled in the service and their families.
 - Volunteers and students engaged within Camden FDC services.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Adequate Supervision** means an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation and knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently.
- 4.2 **Approved First Aid Qualification** means a qualification that includes training in emergency response and management of conditions related to and appropriate to children and has been assessed by ACECQA as suitable for educators working in an education and care setting.
- 4.3 **Approved Provider** means a person who holds a provider approval (*Education and Care Services National Law*). A provider approval authorises a person to apply for one or more education and care service approvals and is valid in all jurisdictions.
- 4.4 **Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)** means the independent national authority that assists governments in administering the National Quality Framework including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
- 4.5 **Authorised Nominee** means a person who has been given permission by a parent or family member to collect the child from the Family Day Care service/educator.
- 4.6 **Authorised Person** means (a) a person who holds a current working with children check (WWCC), or equivalent; or (b) a family member of a child who is being educated and cared for by the service or the family day care (FDC) educator; or (c) an authorised nominee of a family member of a child who is being educated and cared for by the service or the FDC educator; or (d) in the case of an emergency, medical personnel or emergency service personnel; or (e) a person who is permitted under the jurisdictional working with children law to remain at the service without holding a working with children check (WWCC), or equivalent.
- 4.7 **Co-ordination Unit** means the Camden Family Day Care principal office and main faculty for running the Service from which Camden Family Day Care employees work.
- 4.8 **Educational program** means a program that is based on an approved learning framework and is delivered in accordance with the framework. Is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child and is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child.
- 4.9 **Educator** means an individual suitably qualified and registered by Camden Family Day Care to provide education and care, can refer to the Family Day Care educator as the business owner, educator assistant or relief educator.
- 4.10 **Family Day Care (FDC)** means a type of education and care service that is run from the educator's own residence or an approved venue for the purpose of educating and caring for small groups of children aged 0-12 years.
- 4.11 **Family Day Care Service** means the Family Day Care education and care business of each individual educator.

- 4.12 **Hazard** means an unavoidable danger or risk, even though often foreseeable.
- 4.13 **Parent** means the child's mother or father or other person responsible for the child through a court of law as their legal guardian and does not include a parent who is prohibited from having contact with the child
- 4.14 **Reportable Conduct** means certain organisations or entities are required to notify and investigate certain allegations (reportable allegations) of abuse involving a child, when the allegation is against someone they employ, engage or contract in circumstances outlined by the legislation.
- 4.15 **Responsible Person** means a person appointed by the Approved Provider as responsible for overseeing an education and care service, as referred to in section 162(1)(a) to (c) of the *Education and Care Services National Law*.
- 4.16 **Serious Incident** means significant injury, illness, harm or death to a child while the child is being educated and cared for in an education and care setting as described in section 5 (1) of the *Education and Care Services National Law*.
- 4.17 **Risk assessment** means a systematic process of evaluating the potential risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking and determining suitable mitigations.
- 4.18 **Staff** means employees of Camden Council Family Day Care
- 4.19 **Wellbeing** means a positive emotion that results from the satisfaction of basic needs; the need for tenderness and affection; security and clarity; social recognition; to feel competent; physical needs and for meaning in life. It includes happiness and satisfaction, effective social functioning and the dispositions of optimism, openness, curiosity and resilience.
- 4.20 **Water Hazard** means any body of water that poses a potential drowning risk to children and could include; large bodies of water such as rivers, creeks, dams, ponds, swimming pools, jetted bathtubs (or Jacuzzies), in ground spa's, above ground portable spas (or hot tubs) or any container or area with poor drainage that allows water to pool; smaller bodies of water such as baths, nappy buckets, pet water containers, wheel barrows or containers/toys that trap water.
- 4.21 **Working Directly with Children** means a person is working directly with children at a given time if at that time the person is physically present with the children and is directly engaged in providing education and care to the children.

PART 2 - POLICY STATEMENT

5. PRINCIPLES

- 5.1 We acknowledge the major safety risk water poses to young children and take every precaution to eliminate or minimise the risks through ensuring safe practices in all service environments and when taking children out of the service.
- 5.2 The safety of FDC service environments is assessed prior to registration through a comprehensive Educator Residence Risk Assessment, educators must demonstrate how they will ensure their environment is safe for children. Risks are eliminated or effectively managed, strict procedures around swimming pools, ponds and other potential drowning hazards must be followed. Educators carry out daily safety checks prior to their service opening and continuously monitor

throughout the day to ensure the environment remains safe. Staff will carry out annual and random compliance checks on service environments to ensure the management strategies are being upheld and the environments are safe for children.

- 5.3 When planning excursions and outings educators must identify in their risk assessment the risk of water hazards on route and at the destination and eliminate or demonstrate how they can manage these appropriately. Educators are not permitted to take children to any venue that constitutes a water hazard for example a local swimming pool, pond, lake, dam or beach.
- 5.4 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. Children may encounter these resources in the service environment and/or when on excursions. Our educators and staff ensure that all precautions are employed to safeguard children during these experiences.
- 5.5 Supervision is a priority throughout all of our practices, direct supervision is required when children are participating in risky play such as water-based activities.
- 5.6 Clear roles and responsibilities ensure that management, educators and FDC staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to water safety.
- 5.7 FDC services create opportunities for children to learn and develop. This includes incorporating water safety awareness into the educational program.

6. CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 In relation to water safety
 - 7.1.1 Children will be adequately supervised at all times in and around any accessible body of water including water troughs, toilets and nappy buckets. No child is to be left unsupervised at any stage around any body of water.
 - 7.1.2 Any movable water containers that allow a child's face to get into the water (buckets, bowls, laundry buckets) will be stored out of reach of children.
 - 7.1.3 Water play containers will be emptied after each use and stored in a manner that prevents the collection of water when not in use.
 - 7.1.4 Educators are not permitted to take children on excursions or outings to destinations where there is or may be a body of water. A risk assessment will be conducted prior to any excursion taking place.
 - 7.1.5 Educator-to-child ratios will be increased where appropriate around water.
 - 7.1.6 The thermostat on the hot water system is set to a medium temperature to ensure children are not able to scald themselves when washing hands. Kidsafe recommends water should be set at a maximum of 50° Celsius in bathrooms under Australian Standard AS/NZS 3500.4.
 - 7.1.7 Hot water taps that children could potentially reach will be covered with child resistant tap covers or set at the regulation temperature.

- 7.1.8 Sink and bath plugs will be stored out of reach of children.
 - 7.1.9 Children requiring bathing will be bathed using a washcloth and warm water rather than immersed in a bath.
 - 7.1.10 FDC educators should ensure that children do not have access to the hot water overflow.
 - 7.1.11 Mop buckets will be emptied immediately after use.
 - 7.1.12 Water receptacles will be stored undercover when not in use to prevent the unintentional collection of water.
- 7.2 In relation to water hygiene
- 7.2.1 Grey water systems or water tanks will be labelled with “do not drink” signage and the children will be supervised in this area to make sure they are not accessing this water for drinking.
 - 7.2.2 Educators will discuss with the children that this water is for the purpose of play and not for consumption.
 - 7.2.3 Water for pets at the service will be changed regularly and not be accessible to children unless supervised by an adult.
 - 7.2.4 Water containers of any sort will be emptied or covered when not in use.
 - 7.2.5 Safe drinking water will be accessible to children at all times and continually monitored to ensure it is stored hygienically and safe for consumption.
 - 7.2.6 Children’s cups and water bottles are cleaned as required and on a daily basis
 - 7.2.7 Drinking water containers will be emptied and cleaned daily.
- 7.3 In relation to swimming pools, spa’s, other bodies of water
- 7.3.1 Water hazards within the FDC residence, that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times will be isolated from children by a child-resistant barrier or fence.
 - 7.3.2 Risk assessments will determine if ponds and water features will require additional protection such as barriers, fences, gates, walls or doors.
 - 7.3.3 Constant adult supervision will be maintained where swimming pools, bathtubs and indoor spas are included in the children’s environment.
 - 7.3.4 Children enrolled with Camden Family Day Care are not permitted to swim in any pool, spa, jacuzzi or body of water whilst in the care of an educator and parental permission to the contrary will not be accepted.
 - 7.3.5 Wading pools must not be used whilst children are in care. Any wading pool kept at the educators residence must be emptied prior to children entering the service and stored to prevent the collection of water.
 - 7.3.6 Swimming pools and in ground spas must comply with the Swimming Pools Act 1992

- 7.3.7 Educators must ensure that any pool or spa on their premises is registered in the NSW Government Swimming Pools Register.
- 7.3.8 Educators commencing registration with Camden Family Day Care after July 2019 must show evidence of a swimming pool compliance certificate issued by a local authority. Educators must continually comply with their local authority's swimming pool compliance program where there is one.
- 7.3.9 Swimming pools will be enclosed with a barrier that completely separates the pool/spa from the family day care residence or approved venue and other parts of the outdoor environment that complies with the current Australian Standards (AS 196 Set-2007).
- 7.3.10 Spas will be made inaccessible with a locked pool cover or an isolation barrier that conforms to the above Australian Standards.
- 7.3.11 Isolation barriers of at least 1.2meter height that prevents a child going over, under or around other than under supervision will be in place.
- 7.3.12 Fence supports will be regularly checked to ensure they have not been undermined or become loose.
- 7.3.13 Gates will be self-closing, self-latching and have a child resistant lock. Regular checks will be undertaken to ensure the lock mechanism is functioning properly.
- 7.3.14 Objects or furniture that could help a child climb over the barriers or open a gate, door or window will be removed from the environment.
- 7.3.15 A permanent notice within the pool area detailing resuscitation procedures will be displayed.
- 7.3.16 It is the educator's responsibility to advise all new parents/guardians prior to commencing care if they have a pool, dam or water on their property and demonstrate that risk management is in place.
- 7.3.17 Pool filters will be inaccessible to children.
- 7.3.18 Windows with direct access to a pool or spa must not open more than 100mm.
- 7.3.19 Ladders from above-ground pools are to be removed and stored safely when not in use.
- 7.3.20 Where the FDC residence or approved venue is adjacent to, or provides access to creeks, rivers or dams, a safety barrier meeting the Australian Standard (AS 1926.1-2007) must be in place. This safety barrier must separate the body of water from the child's play area.
- 7.3.21 Educators should refer to procedure for managing household renovations or if considering installing a pool, spa, pond or water feature on the service premise and as a part of the planning process should discuss these considerations with the nominated supervisor to ensure all relevant risk, hazard and safety implications have been identified and will be managed.
- 7.3.22 Educators must refer to the *Excursion* policy when planning an outing for

children and must identify and appropriately manage through a risk assessment all water hazards including on route.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 Approved Provider:

- Ensure that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met
- Ensure the *Water Safety* policy and related procedures are in place.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures.
- Ensure the nominated supervisor and co-ordination unit have access to appropriate resources for the development, implementation, training and ongoing management of this policy and its related procedures.
- Ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers, and available for inspection.
- Keep a child safe environment.
- Ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios).
- Ensure risk assessments are undertaken and water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are taken into consideration.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders.
- Ensure that any swimming pool at a FDC residence or approved family day care venue of the service in New South Wales is fenced in accordance with the requirements for fencing a new swimming pool under the Swimming Pools Act 1992 of New South Wales under regulation 274 (3).
- Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will affect the fees and charges and/or significantly impact the service's education and care of children or the family's ability to utilise the service.

7.2 Nominated Supervisor/Team Leader:

- Ensure they conduct themselves and the service practices in accordance with all legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures and as directed by the Approved Provider.
- Implement the *Water Safety* policy and procedures.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that educators, staff, volunteers and students follow the policy and procedures.

- Ensure that communication between educators, the principal office and parents/guardians is adequate to ensure that all parties are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures and they have the opportunity to provide their input into the Service.
- Ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios).
- Inform families about water safety practices at the service.
- Ensure first aid and CPR qualifications and requirements are met at all times.
- Ensure that at least one educator, staff member or nominated supervisor who holds a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance at all times that children are being educated and cared for by the service.
- Ensure risk assessments are undertaken and water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are taken into consideration.
- Ensure any water hazards i.e., ponds or fountains at a FDC residence that could constitute a drowning hazard are securely covered or inaccessible to children.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders.
- Guide and mentor educators and staff to be able to follow the policy and procedures.
- Ensure fully stocked first aid kits are available at the FDC service and taken on and any excursion/outing.
- Ensure discussions with children about water safety, rules and boundaries around water are implemented prior to any water-based activities and excursions.
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice.

7.3 Co-ordination unit staff:

- Ensure they conduct themselves and the service practices in accordance with all legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures and as directed by the nominated supervisor.
- Implement the *Water Safety* policy and procedures.
- Monitor and support educators to ensure their FDC service environments and practices are at all times compliant with legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures.
- Ensure educators are aware of their responsibilities in regard to water safety.

- Provide water safety information from recognised authorities such as Kidsafe to educators and families on a regular basis, at least twice per year.
- Ensure a risk assessment is completed for all FDC planned events and excursions.
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy.
- Guide and mentor educators and staff to be able to follow the policy and procedures.

7.4 Educators:

- Ensure they conduct themselves and their FDC service practices in accordance with all legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures and as directed by the nominated supervisor.
- Educators are aware of and understand that in the case of a FDC education and care service the obligation of an Approved Provider is also the obligation of the FDC educator.
- Must be aware of and implement the *Water Safety* policy and procedures.
- Ensure risk assessments are undertaken and risks associated with water hazards (e.g. spa baths, water features, swimming pools), water-based activities and excursions are eliminated or effectively managed.
- Implement management strategies for water hazards and excursions.
- Ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios).
- Empty, safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers when they are not in use, e.g. mop buckets, nappy buckets, bathtubs, water troughs, pet water containers.
- Ensure water troughs or containers for water play will be supervised at all times and containers or troughs will be emptied after use.
- Inform families about water safety practices in the home.
- Hold a current approved first aid qualification.
- Inspect indoor and outdoor environments for potential water hazards, particularly during and after wet weather.
- Complete a physical check and safety checklist of the environment daily prior to the service opening to ensure all risks are managed effectively.
- Ensure water safety awareness is part of the educational program.

7.5 Families

- Be aware of the *Water Safety* policy and procedures and implement the required practices as directed by the FDC educator and the Service.

- Pack spare clothing so as children can take part in water-based activities.
- Supervise children in their care, including siblings, while attending or assisting at the service or special events.
- Ensure that doors, gates and barriers, including the front door are closed after entry or exist to prevent access to water hazards.
- Assist their children to understand the risks associated with water.
- In relation to excursions, read the risk assessment to ensure a clear understanding of any potential risks and hazards including water hazards before signing an authorisation for children to attend.

8. INDUCTION AND ONGOING TRAINING

- 8.1 Induction and ongoing professional development will be implemented for all educators and staff, focusing on this policy and related procedures.
- 8.2 Educator induction will be implemented as a part of the registration process, their ongoing training requirements and review of their service environments and practices occurs annually at the time of re-registration and as a need is identified.
- 8.3 Information will be shared with educator assistants and relief educators on induction and as relevant to the environments that they are working in, their shift responsibilities and the children in their care.

9. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- 9.1 This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this policy every three years.
- 9.2 Families, educators, and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.
- 9.3 In accordance with R. 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

10. SOURCES AND RESOURCES

- [ACECQA Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- Kids Alive Resource <https://kidsalive.com.au/>
- [Kidsafe Australia | Keeping Children Safe](#)
- Nemours Children's Health <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/water-safety.html>
- [NSW Government Swimming Pools Register](#)
www.swimmingpoolregister.nsw.gov.au/

RELEVANT LEGISLATIVE INSTRUMENTS: *Australian Standards 2012
Children (Education and Care Services)
National Law (NSW) No 104a of 2010
Education and Care Services National
Regulations (2011 SI 653)
Local Government Act 1993 No. 30 and
Regulation
National Quality Standard | Australian
Children's Education and Care Quality
Authority (ACECQA)
Swimming Pools Act 1992
Swimming Pool Regulations 2008
Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

RELATED POLICIES, PLANS AND PROCEDURES: Assessment and reassessment of residences and venues for FDC policy
Documenting and reporting water safety incidents procedure
Emergency and evacuation policy
Excursions policy
Incident, injury, trauma and illness policy
Managing risks around swimming pools and spas procedure
Preventing and managing water safety incidents procedure
Providing a child safe environment policy
The administration of first aid policy

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR: Director Sport, Community and Activation

APPROVAL: General Manager through the Executive Leadership Group.

HISTORY:

Version	Approved by	Changes made	Date	EDMS Number
1		New	March 2005	
2				
3	ELG	Major amendments	March 2022	22/109608