

WATER SAFETY POLICY

Happy Haven OSHC encourages the safe use and play of water and understands the importance of creating a safe environment at all times. The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water, this includes but not limited to; excursions near water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water. Our services have embedded programs which allow for children to have the opportunity to interact and play in water. Happy Haven OSHC ensures adequate supervision of all children during moments of water play to support their development in a safe environment.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDRENS HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS/ EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
77	Health hygiene and safe food practices
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursions
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included
Sec. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Sec. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed

RELATED POLICIES

Work, Health and Safety Policy	Supervision of Children Policy
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Physical Environment Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy

First Aid, Incidents, Injury, Trauma Policy
Excursions Policy

PURPOSE

Happy Haven OSHC acknowledges the risks posed by bodies of water (or any area where there is at least 5cm of water deep) and takes the safety of children and educators involved in water-based activities and around bodies of water seriously. Happy Haven OSHC will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children are able to enjoy water-based activities safely.

Drowning is one of the leading causes of unintentional deaths amongst children in Australia, with almost all water related deaths a product of a lack of supervision (Royal Life Saving, 2021). Therefore, the most effective method to safeguard children around water is active and direct supervision. Risk assessments will be carried out for programmed water-based activities and the outcomes will underpin the educator to child ratio for such activities (KidSafe, 2018).

SCOPE

This policy applies to families, educators, responsible persons and nominated supervisors at Happy Haven OSHC.

WATER HAZARDS

The National Regulations refer to '*water hazards*' however the term is not expressly defined. In this policy, a water hazard is defined as anything that can hold 5cm of water, fits in a child's nose and mouth. A 'water hazard' may also include:

- large bodies of water such as dams, creeks, river or pooling water, swimming pool, portable pools and spas, jetted bathtubs (or Jacuzzis)
- fishponds
- smaller bodies of water such as baths, mop buckets
- sinks, basins
- water features, such as a wishing well
- containers for feeding animals
- water troughs, containers for paddling- clam shells
- beach

IMPLEMENTATION

In accordance with s168 of the Education and Care Service National Regulations, an approved provider must have policies and procedures pertaining to, conducting and engaging with water safety from excursions to water-based activities at services. Non-fatal drowning can occur within a matter of moments carrying the possibility for long-term effects to the brain and mobility. Happy Haven OSHC will implement and take reasonable steps to ensure these policies and procedures are followed.

When submitting Vacation Care availability, educators are requested to authorise whether they are willing and able to participate from within a pool or body of water. This is to ensure Happy Haven OSHC can maintain a sufficient ratio of educators supervising within the pool or body of water. Where authorisation has been given, educators rostered for water play or swimming days are expected to bring suitable clothing or swimwear that allows them to participate in programmed activities (see Sun Safe Policy)

THE NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/RESPONSIBLE PERSON WILL:

- Conduct a risk assessment which considers all hazards and risks associated with water-based activities prior to commencing an excursions or incursions – these risk assessments must be approved
- Controls implemented to eliminate or minimise the risk as much is reasonably practicable
- Ensure water hazards and water play are always highly supervised by:
 - Directly and constantly monitoring children near/in water
 - Carefully positioning educators at crucial positions when in or near bodies of water
 - Maintaining active supervision through scanning and moving around the environment
 - Increasing educator to children ratios on excursions and incursions with bodies of water
- Ensure that all families and educators are aware of the importance of supervision at all times when water is present
- Always comply with qualified educator's ratio requirements – at minimum one in attendance with an approved first aid qualification
- Outline safe storage of water and water play in health and safety practices
- Prefer venues that provide additional supervision in the form of lifeguards
- Vary the number of educators directly supervising in the water and out of the water

- The responsible person will consider an educator's water confidence and ability prior to allocating supervision zones
- Not accept bookings from children four years and under
- Use wet floor signs on areas that are likely to become slipping hazards
- Ensure hot water is inaccessible to children
- Use floatation devices when necessary

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Engage in active supervision when children are near water at all times
- Never walk away or leave children alone in water without ensuring there is another educator able to actively supervise
- Create a safe learning environment for children of all ages when engaging in water-based activities
 - Allowing children to explore sensory play by mixing various materials such as sand and water
 - Educate children on the importance of staying safe in water
- Utilise water activities in appropriate weather as part of the planned program
 - Encourage appropriate swimwear/bathers when playing with water – referring to SunSmart guidance
- Keep themselves updated on the water safety policy
- Ensure that they are aware of any water hazards present at the service (hose, sprinklers, faulty taps) to keep children away from the hazard to the best ability
- Empty any plastic toys and equipment that hold water after use to prevent water collection and away from children
- If applicable at the service, ensure water trough are not used without a stand to keep it off the ground
- Discourage children from drinking from these water activities
- If utilising a wading pool, ensuring that they are hygienically cleaned and disinfected

WATER PLAY WITH SPRINKLERS AND HOSES

- Educators will supervise and guide children to use sprinklers and hoses in an appropriate, sustainable, and respectful manner to achieve safe water levels, maintain a safe physical environment and avoid unwanted spray of other spectators.
 - All sprinklers and hoses are switched off and safely packed away after use
- When utilising hoses and sprinklers, where possible, choose an area that will benefit from the extra water e.g. grassed areas
- Sprinklers to remain on the ground and only handled by educators
- All educators to ensure that hoses are not put in the mouths of the children

Further information

Parents will be notified as soon as practicable but within 24 hours if their child is involved in an incident/accident at the service or while under the care of the Happy Haven OSHC. The details of the incident/accident will be recorded on an Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Record.

If the incident/accident, situation, or event presents imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of the child or if an ambulance was called in response to the emergency (not as a precaution) the regulatory authority will be notified within 24 hours. Educators will follow emergency procedures and contact emergency services if a child appears to be missing or unaccounted for or is involved in a serious incident or accident.

SOURCE

ACECQA. (2021). Policy and procedure guidelines. *Water Safety Guidelines*.

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

BetterHealth Victoria. (2021). *Water safety for children*, accessed on 10/03/2021, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/water-safety-for-children>

Department of Education South Australia (July 2021) Preschool water safety procedure

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011)

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations (2017).

Kids Health SCHN (2021) *Drowning prevention and water safety*, accessed on 09/03/2021, <https://kidshealth.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/drowning-prevention-and-water-safety#:~:text=Drowning%20is%20still%20one%20of,delays%20and%20other%20health%20problems.>

KidSafe (2021). *Water Safety*, accessed on 11/03/2021, <https://kidsafe.com.au/water-safety/>

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	MAY 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	REVIEW	MAY 2023
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy updated with information added from Education and Care Service regulation • Further research on water safety added • Sources checked for currency 			
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE	REVIEW
Month YYYY	•		Month YYYY	
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