

LOCKDOWN POLICY

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* the approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for emergency and evacuation situations (regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (regulation 170) (ACECQA 2021).

Our Service is committed to the ongoing safety and wellbeing of children, staff, families and visitors. To achieve this, we will implement a clear plan to manage all emergency situations, including a plan for emergencies that may require our Service to go into lockdown and ensure our educators and staff are well equipped with the knowledge and expertise to respond effectively when required. Children and staff will regularly rehearse our emergency procedures, including lockdown to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
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, practiced and implemented.

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
12(d)	Meaning of a serious incident- any emergency for which emergency services attended
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
98	Telephone or other communication equipment
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
168	Education and Care Services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures are to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

RELATED POLICIES

Acceptance and Refusal Authorisation Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Delivery of Children to and Collection from Education and Care Services Premises Emergency Evacuation Policy Family Communication Policy	Health and Safety Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Retention of Records Policy Supervision Policy
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PURPOSE

We aim to minimise the risk of harm, ensuring the safety of children, educators, families, and visitors of the Service in the event of a threatening situation.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

We have set procedures to follow in the event of any emergency requiring evacuation or lockdown. These procedures comply with regulatory requirements and are consistent with recommendations by recognised authorities. They are designed to ensure an efficient, safe, and calm procedure for all children, staff, families, and visitors.

Whilst many emergency situations will require staff and children to evacuate from the Service, there are potential situations that will require the Service to go into 'lockdown'.

Within early childhood services there are three types of lockdown that may be required:

- **'External threat'** indicating that there is a potential threat outside that you wish to prevent from entering the building. For example:
 - Unidentified dangerous animal or insects
- **'Shelter-in-place'** which generally will be required when there is a real or perceived threat to health or safety. For example:
 - Severe storms
 - Extreme smoke from a local or distant bushfire
 - Chemical or hazardous substance spill
 - Gas leak / atmospheric hazardous substance
 - Flood
- **'Full lockdown'** for situations that involve serious threats such as:
 - Potentially dangerous unwanted or uninvited intruder
 - Potentially dangerous person due to intoxication or substance abuse
 - Receiving an emergency services warning about a reported incident or civil disturbance

Lockdown means that all windows and external doors are locked, and where possible internal doors are locked, and blinds closed.

For a 'Shelter-in-place' or 'External threat' lockdown, children are able to participate in the usual experiences and activities: However, for a 'Full lockdown', children and adults must be moved to a room/position that does not allow them to be viewed.

Where possible access should be maintained to a bathroom and enough space should be available for children to be comfortably involved in quiet activities. It is therefore vital that appropriate spaces have been identified and displayed on an **Emergency Lockdown Procedure**.

This information must be displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the premises in relation to regulation 97(4).

MANAGEMENT OR NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- develop, and review annually, a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that may require the service to go into lockdown
- engage relevant stakeholders/authorities to improve risk mitigation strategies for lockdown situations as part of our Emergency Management Plan (police, fire, parents/families)
- ensure capacity to lock internal doors
- consider procedures for children and staff implications in the event of a lockdown
- ensure new staff, volunteers and students are provided with information and training about lockdown procedures upon induction
- ensure emergency evacuation plans and procedures are displayed in prominent positions near each exit in the indoor learning environments
- nominate the person/people with authority to manage the lockdown
- determine communication channels- ensure all educators and staff have access to an operating telephone or means of communication- consider use of communication apps for silent group communication among staff members (What's app, Messenger)
- determine how the different type of lockdown alert signal will be given
- contact emergency services as soon as practicable- provide essential information to police depending on the type of lockdown- (e.g.: description of the intruder, threat, weapons)
- design a movement and wellbeing plan to follow if not in an indoor learning environment
- develop an effective strategy for checking the attendance roll and communicating with children, educators, families, and visitors of the Service
- document roles and responsibilities of staff and educators
- plan to maintain children's safety and wellbeing
- ensure all children, staff, families, and visitors of the Service remain inside
- ensure lockdown drills are practiced *every three months* at different times to ensure all staff and children have the opportunity to participate
- document emergency lockdown rehearsals including the responsible person who is present at the time of the rehearsal
- ensure lockdown drills are reviewed and reflected upon each time they occur and are adequately documented including any improvements
- communicate with families about lockdown procedures and drills
- complete a serious incident notification to the regulatory authority within 24 hours when there has been an emergency that has posed a risk to the safety and wellbeing of the children

IN THE EVENT OF A LOCKDOWN, EDUCATORS WILL:

- direct children to shelter in place indoors, where doors can be locked or barricaded securely (as per plan)
- ensure all children are accounted for (check daily sign on /app)
- immediately lock doors and windows
- close all blinds/curtains
- ensure all children remain inside the indoor learning space (or are accompanied by an educator/staff member if going to the bathroom)
- ensure children remain in a confined area, (or out of sight for a '*full lockdown*' – see below) during the lockdown period
- ensure children remain calm: except for '*full lockdown*', arrange activities to engage them
- remain in lockdown until the all-clear signal is given
- ensure all families are notified of the incident as soon as practicable after the lockdown has ended

ADDITIONALLY, DURING A SHELTER-IN-PLACE LOCKDOWN, EDUCATORS WILL:

- use any available linen to block gaps around doors or window to minimise the entry of smoke/hazardous chemicals

ADDITIONALLY, DURING A FULL LOCKDOWN, MANAGEMENT, NOMINATED SUPERVISORS WILL:

- implement lockdown procedure
- alert staff using agreed signal for immediate lockdown
- contact emergency services (000) for assistance
- remove the evacuation plan from the walls of the Service
- move infants and children to a secure designated lockdown location
- lock external doors, window and close blinds and turn off lights
- clear any room/hallway that cannot be secured
- silence televisions and radios/CD players
- silence mobile devices such as phones
- ensure all children remain low away from doors and windows
- encourage all children to remain quiet: Have books ready for children to look at to assist with engaging them during the lockdown
- ensure all children and persons in the room remain out of sight of external windows and glass doors, and internal viewing windows
- ensure all families are notified of the incident as soon as practicable after the lockdown has ended
- complete a serious incident notification to the regulatory authority within 24 hours when there has been an emergency that has posed a risk to the safety and wellbeing of the children
- provide opportunities for debriefing and counselling to families and children and staff.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Lockdown Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority. (2021). Emergency and Evacuation Policy Guidelines.

Australian Government Department of Education (2020). Help in an emergency

[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).

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2018). (Amended 2020)

Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4th Ed.).

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018)