

# WATER SAFETY POLICY

Quality Areas: NQS 2 – Children’s Health and Safety

Policy Owner: Safety and Compliance

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## 1.0 Introduction and Purpose

This policy embeds children’s rights, safety, and wellbeing as a paramount consideration in all water-related practices.

Water is a valuable resource that supports children’s learning, development, and wellbeing through sensory exploration and the development of scientific and mathematical concepts.

Children have access to drinking water throughout the day, in addition to mealtimes, to support hydration. Water is also available for hygiene purposes, including handwashing before meals and after toileting, which occurs throughout the day. Independent access is provided where developmentally appropriate, with infants supported by educators.

While water play offers meaningful learning opportunities, it also presents risks. The centre is committed to maintaining appropriate supervision, risk management, and safe practices to ensure children are safe in and around water at all times.

## 2.0 Who does this policy apply to:

All team members and children

## 3.0 What is our Policy:

This policy ensures that all water-related practices in the centre prioritise children’s safety, wellbeing, and learning, in accordance with regulatory requirements and best practice guidelines.

### 3.1 Risk Assessment

A risk assessment will be conducted for all outings, excursions, and regular activities where bodies of water are present, or when water play experiences are introduced in indoor or outdoor learning spaces. The assessment will consider the age, development, and abilities of the children, as well as environmental hazards and access points to water, to ensure all foreseeable risks are identified and managed.

### 3.2 Water Temperature and Safety

Water for play or use by children will not exceed 43.5°C to prevent scalding, and a probe thermometer may be used to verify temperatures. Boiled water for infant formula will be cooled before use and prepared only in designated bottle preparation areas or kitchens, away from children. Recognised authorities will test hot water systems annually to ensure temperatures are safe for children.

### 3.3 Supervision and Staffing



Direct supervision will be provided for all water play experiences, with staff considering children's age, developmental stage, and group size. Team members involved in water-related activities will maintain current First Aid and CPR qualifications. Educators will not consume hot drinks in learning spaces or while supervising children on outings or excursions to prevent accidental spills or burns.

### **3.4 Water Hygiene and Handling**

Drinking water bottles and containers will be emptied, cleaned, and refilled daily. Grey water systems and water tanks will be clearly labelled as "Non-potable / Do not drink" and regularly monitored to prevent unsupervised access by children. Grey water systems and tanks will be cleaned and maintained regularly, with large tanks of 2,000 litres or more professionally cleaned every two years and gutters cleaned every six months. Water for pets will be changed daily and only accessible to children under supervision. All water containers, including those used in play, will be emptied or covered when not in use, and all pooled water from rain or play will be promptly removed to reduce drowning risks.

### **3.5 Educational Program and Water Awareness**

Water safety will be embedded into the educational program. Children will be taught about safe practices, the purpose of water in the environment, and the difference between potable and non-potable water -. Educators will discuss with children that water from tanks or grey water sources is for play or garden use only and is not safe for drinking.

### **3.6 Resources and Family Communication**

Water safety resources and guidance for families will be made available via Storypark or in the family/foyer area of the centre. Families will be informed of water-related procedures and encouraged to reinforce safe practices at home.

### **3.7 Additional Water Safety Requirements**

Water play equipment will be age-appropriate, stable, and inspected daily for hazards. Water depth in any play experience will be minimal and appropriate to children's age, typically no more than ankle height for young children. Educators will plan water play to avoid overcrowding and ensure adequate staff-to-child ratios. Any incidents or near misses involving water will be recorded, reviewed, and used to update risk assessments. Emergency procedures, including evacuation and rescue plans, will include water safety considerations.

## **4.0 Responsibilities**

### **4.1 Approved Provider will:**

1. Ensure that water systems are maintained to ensure adequate water is available at the centres
2. Provide information to centre as required in relation to safe water usage
3. Ensure that hot water temperature testing is undertaken annually by the Facilities Team

### **4.2 Centre Manager / Nominated Supervisor (NS) will:**

1. Ensure that all team members follow and understand the water safety policy and procedure by providing supervision, guidance and advice
2. Ensure that children are adequately supervised during water related activities
3. Ensure risk assessments for excursions planned near water identify a higher staff to child ratio to ensure adequate supervision
4. Ensure a systematic system is in place to ensure all First Aid and CPR qualifications and requirements are met
5. Provide information about safety considerations around water safety
6. Ensure team members, visitors or families do not consume hot drinks in any area accessible to children



7. Water tanks will have a scheduled clean yearly and be checked regularly to ensure water is safe for children
8. If the centre provides access to a self-service coffee machine or offers hot drinks to families or visitors, these beverages must not be taken into learning spaces
9. Grey water systems or water tanks are labelled with “non potable water / do not drink” signage
10. Ensure that there are sufficient team members trained in first aid at the centre and that there is always a team member with a current first-aid certificate at any water-based activity i.e. swimming lessons or an excursion where water is a feature such as a lake.

**4.3 Team Members will:**

1. Ensure safe, clean, and fresh drinking water is available to all children indoors and outdoors. Regularly provide cooled boiled water for infants under 12 months of age
2. When planning any water experience, identify any possible risks and put in place strategies to minimise these risks giving consideration to time of the day, adequate supervision for the experience, and other tasks or activities performed at this time
3. Ensure that no amount of pooled water is left unattended
4. Ensure you communicate with families the importance of regular cleaning of water bottles at home. Where water bottles are not suitably cleaned at home, team members will undertake cleaning at the centre
5. Embed water safety messages into the indoor and outdoor program
6. Ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level, emptied or covered securely after use, including water pump containers and creek beds
7. Empty buckets used for cleaning immediately after use. Cleaning buckets that are used to clean up spills should be managed to prevent children’s access
8. After rain, any troughs, containers, or sand pit covers are checked for water, and are emptied before children have access to the area
9. Implement correct manual handling techniques when moving or emptying containers or water troughs
10. Ensure children are not drinking the grey water or from the rainwater tank. A sign ‘non potable water / do not drink’ and a visual image is displayed near grey water and on the rainwater tank
11. Educate children about the grey water, rainwater tank and sustainable practices
12. Change children into clean dry clothes after the child has finished exploring water
13. Ensure that drains and plumbing are not blocked by sand, dirt, or leaves so that the drainage systems work effectively

**4.4 Families will:**

1. Provide a change of suitable clothes for children to
2. Ensure that where a water bottle or bottles are required at the centre that this is supplied and they are clean

**5.0 Tools and Resources**

<p><b>The most important documents I need are:</b>          Risk Assessment Form          Regular Outing and Excursion Resources          Safe Environments</p>	<p><b>Other supporting documents will include:</b>          Heat and Play Safety Share          Working Safely Using the Stanley Infrared Thermometer</p>
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**6.0 Sources**

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| Act Section 165     | Offence to inadequately supervise children                                |
| Act Section 167     | Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards          |
| Regulation 25(1)(c) | Additional information about proposed education and care service premises |



- Regulation 101 Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
- Regulation 115 Premises designed to facilitate supervision
- Regulation 116B Inspection report
- Regulation 168(2)(a)(iii) Education and care services must have policies and procedures on water safety, including safety during any water-based activities
- Regulation 170 Policies and procedures to be followed
- Regulation 171 Policies and procedures to be kept available
- Regulation 172 Notification of change to policies or procedures
- Regulation 274 Swimming pools (NSW only)

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