

Acorn Child Care Centres

Policies and Procedures



2.23 Work Health and Safety Policy

Background

Services have responsibility to protect the health and safety of each individual at all times. A service's health and safety policies and practices affect an individual's physical and psychological health and safety.

The Workplace Health and Safety Policy is important not only for children, families and educators but related to every person who enters the service's premises or uses the service equipment.

Federal, state and territory governments have their own Workplace Health and Safety legislation and regulations, which govern the standards of health and safety in the workplace. Therefore, services must comply with the relevant Workplace Health and Safety.

Policy statement

Acorn has a duty of care to provide all persons with a safe and healthy environment. Acorns Workplace Health and Safety policy adheres to Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, Occupational Health and Safety Systems AS/NZS and Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007. The service also complies with Education and Care National Law Act 2010, Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and the National Quality Standards.

Strategies and practices

- The services Workplace Health and Safety policy applies to all hazardous chemicals, events, situations, tasks and buildings, equipment, methods, materials, substances, products and vehicles used for transporting children.
- It is understood that there is a shared legal responsibility and accountability between and a commitment by, all persons to implement the services policy, procedures and practices.
- The service has a workplace health and safety officer who handles all workplace health and safety issues, concerns or communication.
- All new staff of the service are orientated with the Workplace Health and Safety policy and procedures during their orientation process.
- All staff are trained in chemical handling and material safety data sheets are kept for all chemical substances in the service.
- The service uses risk management strategies to eliminate or minimise risks from occurring or controlling risks when they arise.

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- At the service risks are identified by considering, what is the risk, what is the nature of the risk, what is the history of the risk, probability of the risk occurring in normal conditions, probability of risk occurring in abnormal conditions, history of incidents and emergencies relating to the risk.

At the service once risks have been identified and assessed they are controlled, minimised or eliminated using the step by step hierarchy to controlling risks. (see risk minimisation plan).

- The Service's building, facilities, furniture and equipment meet licensing requirements and those of all relevant national and state regulatory bodies, local council, and the Building Code of Australia. QA 3.1.1
- Play equipment has been installed strictly according to manufacturers' recommendations. All fixed equipment meets the Australian/New Zealand Safety Standards, and is well maintained. QA 2.3.2. 3.1.2
- All toys meet Australian Safety Standards, and are age appropriate, well maintained and have non-toxic finishes. QA 2.3.2, 3.1.2
- The Service employs a handyman to repair equipment when necessary. A Maintenance Book is used to record the details of repairs. No item is used after repair until the Nominated Supervisor has checked and approved the repair. QA 2.3.2, 3.1.2
- Educators complete an Open and Close Checklist, twice daily, before the Service opens and closes to ensure the environment is safe for children. Each Friday afternoon the lists are taken to the main office to be filed. QA 2.3.2, 3.1.2
- Should any matter requiring immediate attention be identified during the educators' checks, educators complete a Hazard Report Form and place it the designated place for the Nominated Supervisor's immediate attention. QA 3.1.2
- The Service is safe, clean and well maintained. Refer to the Service's *Cleaning Policy*. QA 3.1.2
- The Nominated Supervisor ensures a comprehensive Service safety audit is conducted every three months, and documents it. This audit covers all play areas, approaches to the Service, outdoor environments, kitchen, laundry and other utility areas, fences and general maintenance items. Any items requiring attention are recorded in the Maintenance Book, and the audit document filed. QA 3.1.2
- The Nominated Supervisor ensures a emergency and evacuation drill is conducted every three months, and records the process.
- Every two years, the Service engages an external expert to conduct a compliance and safety audit of every aspect of the Service's building and facilities. QA 2.3.2, 3.1.2

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Additional safe practices for babies

- All equipment (e.g. cots, high chairs, prams) used by babies is regularly cleaned and serviced and meets Australian Standards. QA 2.3.2

Responsibilities of parents

- To ensure their children do not drop items along pathways, halls and entry areas when entering or leaving the Service.
- To ensure that they close the gates and doors securely behind them as they move into and out of the building and rooms.
- To drive slowly and carefully in and around the driveways and car park areas as children may be moving through those spaces with parents

Links to other policies

- Cleaning Policy
- Safe play spaces Policy
- Dangerous Products, Plants, Vermin and Objects Policy
- Supervision Policy

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.
- AS/NZS Occupational health and safety systems
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007

Further reading and useful websites

- Kidsafe – <http://www.kidsafe.com.au/>
- Safework Australia- <http://www.worksafeqld.gov.au>
- Royal Children’s Hospital. (n.d.). *Playground safety: Risk, challenge and supervision for playground safety*. <http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/safetycentre/3-PlaygroundSafety.pdf> accessed 24 November 2013
- Standards Australia – <http://www.standards.org.au/>

Policy review

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The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

12/05/2016							
15/05/2017							
28/02/2019							

Next review Date: 28/02/2020