

Acorn Child Care Centres

Policies and Procedures



2.18 Evacuation and Lockdown

Background

Early childhood services must ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children at all times they are at the service. They must also ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and anyone else on the premises. To achieve these ends, services need a clear plan for the management of emergency situations so that educators are best equipped to respond calmly and effectively.

Policy statement

The Service has procedures to follow in the event of any emergency necessitating evacuation. These procedures comply with regulatory requirements and are consistent with recommendations by recognised authorities. They are designed to ensure the swift, safe and calm evacuation of all children, staff, families and visitors. Evacuations are rehearsed regularly so that educators and children are confident in knowing what to do. The Service has lockdown procedures in response to any critical incident or foreseeable threat of harm to staff, children or visitors. Such an event could be:

- A hostage situation;
- A siege;
- Violent, intoxicated and/or drug affected persons;
- Dangerous animals;
- Unidentified external disturbance; or,
- Severe storm.

Strategies and practices

Evacuation

- Families are informed of the Service's emergency procedures at enrolment and orientation and throughout the year. They are also provided with educational materials (e.g. fire safety). QA 2.3.3, 6.1.1
- The Service's Evacuation and Lockdown Policy and evacuation procedures are based on risk assessment that identified the potential emergencies relevant to the Service. QA 2.3.3
- Emergency evacuation plans are prominently displayed throughout the Service. These plans consist of a floor plan of the Service and indicate the reader's location, the nearest exit, the route to that exit, and assembly areas. QA 2.3.3
- All exit signs are clearly visible and escape routes and emergency exits kept clear at all times. QA 2.3.3
- The Service has the required number of fire extinguishers and fire blankets together with other emergency equipment throughout the Service. Fire extinguishers are tested and tagged, and all other equipment checked as recommended. All checks are documented. QA 2.3.3
- All fire equipment is appropriately sign-posted and kept immediately accessible at all times. QA 2.3.3
- The Service maintains up-to-date emergency contact details for every child and a compact copy of these is taken to the assembly point. QA 2.3.3

Acorn Child Care Centres

Policies and Procedures



- The contact numbers of emergency services are displayed beside all telephone outlets in the Service. QA 2.3.3
- All educators are trained in the use of fire extinguishers, fire blankets and other emergency fire equipment every 2 years and know where these items are located. QA 2.3.3
- The Service's security alarm system is appropriately maintained according to the installer's instructions. QA 2.3.3
- The Nominated Supervisor ensures that all staff know the Service's Policy and Procedures for emergency evacuations and that they know their roles and responsibilities. These roles and responsibilities are posted beside the emergency evacuation plans displayed throughout the Service. Students, and volunteers are told about emergency procedures during orientation and to follow directions from educators at these times. QA 2.3.3
- Evacuation procedures are rehearsed every three months. Rehearsal occurs at different times on different days of the week. Everyone in the Service at the time, including visitors, is expected to participate. The Nominated Supervisor sends out advance notice of each rehearsal (including the date and approximate time) to all staff to encourage their understanding and cooperation. It also ensures that staff recognise a genuine alarm activation when it occurs. QA2.3.3
- Parents are informed that an evacuation rehearsal has occurred via notice in the centre or on the parent portal. QA 2.3.3
- The Responsible Person present at the time oversees the rehearsals and is responsible for completing the Evacuation and Lockdown Report (in conjunction with other staff members), and for implementing any improvements identified in that Report. QA 2.3.3
- In the event of a power failure, the Service has a discrete telephone with its own line as a back-up. The Service also has a mobile phone. QA 2.3.3
- Educators intentionally teach children about fire safety (e.g. through discussions, songs, games, role-play, fire brigade visits). Parents are provided with educational material about fire safety in the home and encouraged to work in partnership with educators by continuing the fire safety message at home. QA 2.3.3, 6.3.1
- The Regulatory Authority and any other government health and safety authority concerned are notified of any incident requiring evacuation at the Service. QA 7.3.3
- A sign indicating that fire drill is in process will be placed on the front door. One staff member will meet fire brigade and give details of fire and whether all staff and children have been accounted for.
- After any incident requiring evacuation of the Service, counselling/debriefing is available to anyone affected. Children are likely to role-play the event afterwards so any debriefing will include preparing educators to respond appropriately. QA 2.1.1

Lockdown

- The Service has a signal – distinct from the evacuation signal – to alert staff of the need for lockdown. The signal has been chosen taking into account the need for discretion that could accompany such an event (e.g. a parent acting against a court order). QA 2.3.3

Initial notification

- The witness to the event alerts the Nominated Supervisor immediately.

Acorn Child Care Centres

Policies and Procedures



- The Nominated Supervisor determines whether or not lockdown is appropriate.
- If yes, the Nominated Supervisor activates the lockdown signal.
- Dial 000 for police/emergency services assistance, and follows the operator's instructions.
- Staff follow all directions of the Nominated Supervisor explicitly. QA 2.3.3
- During lockdown
- All educators and children inside are to remain in their rooms and those outside are to go inside immediately and follow lockdown procedures. QA 2.3.3
- Educators are to lock all doors and windows (draw curtains/blinds) and ensure children are kept secure (e.g.under tables). QA 2.3.3
- Educators check the marked rolls and ensure that all signed-in children are present, and as soon as it is safe to do so, inform the Nominated Supervisor of the names of any children unaccounted for. QA 2.3.3
- Phone lines are to be kept open for use in contacting emergency services only. In case of a medical emergency, notify the Nominated Supervisor. QA 2.3.3
- Educators without children are to lock all external doors and windows (e.g. front door, laundry). QA 2.3.3
- Everyone is to remain in lockdown until the Nominated Supervisor announces the "All Clear." QA 2.3.3

After lockdown

- The Nominated Supervisor notifies parents as soon as possible after the lockdown has ended. QA 2.1.4
- The lockdown will be documented, and the Service's response reviewed. QA 7.2.3

Additional safe practices for babies

- The Service has a labelled evacuation cot. QA 2.3

Responsibilities of parents

- To ensure all contact details for parents and those of the authorised nominees are complete, accurate and up to-date.

Links to other policies

- Administration of Medication Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Incident, Injury and Trauma and Illness Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Supervision Policy

Sources, Further reading and useful websites

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.
- Kidsafe. Factsheets. <http://www.kidsafeqld.com.au/publications/fact-sheets> accessed 23 November 2013
- Queensland Fire and Rescue Service – <https://www.fire.qld.gov.au/>

13/12/2016							
------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Acorn Child Care Centres Policies and Procedures



28/02/2019							

Next review Date: 28/02/2020