



Policy No: CE-POL-020/1/2026

Water Safety Procedure — This is subject to a DfE controlled procedure

Custodian: Management Committee

Custodian Contact:
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Version No: 1

Approved By:
Burcu Subasi
Chairperson

On behalf of the Management Committee.

Approval Date: 13/5/26

Next Review Date:

Supersedes: Water Safety Policy version 3

1 Purpose:

C.a.F.E. Enfield Children's Centre is committed to ensuring children are kept safe when in and around water including when engaging in water-based activities as part of the learning environment, and when managing water hazard risks in and away from the service.

Drowning is one of the most common causes of unintentional death in Australia in children aged 4 years and younger. Children, especially toddlers seem to be drawn to water whether it is in the bath, the toilet, buckets, swimming pools, puddles, or other vessel. The most common factor in childhood drowning is a lack of supervision. A child can die silently by drowning in as little as 3 cm of water in less than 2 minutes¹. The supervision and safety of children with and around water is of paramount importance.

This procedure must be read alongside the DfE [water safety policy](#). Together, these address the requirements in regulation 168 of the National Regulations for education and care services to have policies and procedures in place for managing water safety, including safety during any water-based experiences.

2 Scope:

Approved Provider (this service has 2 Approved providers-DfE and the Management Committee)
Nominated Supervisor
Responsible Person on Duty
Educators
Families & Children
Students & Volunteers

¹ [Water Safety | Kidsafe SA](#)

3 Supporting Documents:

[Incident, Illness, Trauma & Injury Policy](#)

[Supervision of Children policy](#)

[DfE Preschool Water Safety Policy](#)

DfE Risk Management Policy and Framework

Excursions Risk Management form

Safety Inspection Checklist – GROUNDS

4 Policy Details:

At C.a.F.E. Enfield Children's Centre we believe in the importance of :

- Providing children with opportunities to develop their understanding of the natural environment. Experiences with water encourage active exploration and discovery of the environment.
- Providing children with sensory experiences (including water play) that assist with sensory & emotional regulation.
- Ensuring that children are protected from the risks associated with water so that they can safely engage in the learning environment, free from harm and hazard.
- Ensuring that curriculum planning incorporates water safety awareness.
- Providing information to educators, staff, parents, carers, volunteers, and others at the service about water safety.
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Children must be actively supervised at all times when having access to any water hazards. When children are taken on an excursion where there is a significant water hazard, educators are to conduct a risk assessment prior to the excursion.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure active supervision is provided given the ages and development needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios.)• Inform families about water safety practices at the service• Ensure first aid and CPR qualifications and requirements are met at all times.• Undertake risk assessments for all water hazards including water-based experiences in and away from the service• Take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures and risk assessments are current, reviewed regularly and communicated to all stakeholders including as part of staff induction processes.
Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspecting indoor and outdoor environments for potential water hazards, particularly during and after wet weather.• Undertake risk assessments for all water hazards including water-based experiences in and away from the service• Ensure all water containers (buckets, trays, water play equipment) are emptied immediately after use and stored safely to eliminate possible drowning hazards

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote water safety messages to children as part of the teaching and learning program.• Ensure hazards are managed as outlined in this procedure |
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6 Procedures:

Active Supervision

It is imperative that educators remain vigilant in their supervision of children in and around water and are alert to potential risks in everyday practice in the environment.

To ensure water hazards and water play experiences are actively supervised at all times educators will follow the 6 steps for active supervision as follows:

1. Set up the environment
2. Position educators (Note, when using a water trough an educator needs to be within 1-2 metres of the trough at all times)
3. Scan and count
4. Listen
5. Observe play & anticipate behaviour
6. Engage and redirect

For further guidance on the above 6 steps, refer to <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/active-supervision-6-steps>

Managing water hazards

A water hazard is defined as anything that can hold 3cm of water and fit a child's nose and mouth.

water hazards in children's learning environments include:

- sinks, basins, fish tanks,
- water courses, sandpits,
- water troughs, containers and buckets used for play,
- pooling water.

To ensure children are protected from harm that may be caused by water hazards we implement the following:

- Daily yard checks are conducted prior to children accessing the outdoor play space. Checks include ensuring there are no standing pools of water or containers that may have filled overnight
- Assess any potential water hazards as part of our [daily visual inspection](#) of the outdoor environment including ensuring gates are locked and fences are secure and monitor areas where there may be poor drainage.
- Ensure risk assessments are comprehensive, up to date and followed by all staff including maintenance staff and volunteers.
- Ensure that water play troughs and containers are emptied & packed away immediately after use.
- Ensure that the design of the environment facilitates adequate drainage of water to prevent pooling.
- Report any water hazards of concern to the Director so they can be entered on the department incident management system.

- Water courses are designed so that water flows into sandpits which have good drainage
- The fish tank is secured on a raised cupboard & covered with a secure lid
- Children are not permitted in the laundry or kitchen.
- Children's handwashing sinks are fitted with time restricted taps and do not have plugs to minimise risk of sinks filling with water.
- Outdoor tap handles are only accessible to educators and are stored out of children's reach when not in use
- The watercourse hand pump is locked when not in use.
- Children are discouraged from drinking from unsafe water sources, such as during water activities or from rainwaters tanks.
- Educators create opportunities to reinforce water safety messages within the Early Years Learning Framework so that children can safely explore their natural environment and learn about water safety.

Risk Assessment

- Risk assessments are completed prior to children's exposure to potential water hazards either in and around the learning environment or when planning for excursions and regular outings.
- Risk assessments cover the following matters:
 - Active supervision and the additional supervision required to undertake the proposed activity.
 - Elimination of water hazards
 - Restricting access to water hazards
 - Education strategies for prevention
- When assessing risk, we make sure:
 - The proposed activity will not go ahead if we can not implement sufficient controls to ensure children's safety in and around water.
 - When choosing locations for regular outings and excursions, consideration will be given to the purpose of the activity and avoid unnecessary exposure to water hazards where possible.
 - Children are involved in assessing the risk to support their understanding of potential hazards and how to keep themselves safe.

When implementing risk assessments, we make sure

- All educators, staff and volunteers clearly understand their roles and responsibilities in order to effectively implement risk management strategies.
- The risk assessment is available at the service and can be easily accessed.
- Risk assessments are reviewed on a yearly basis or when circumstances change.

6 Related Legislation and Regulations

Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011, Schedule 1
Education and Care Services National Law (South Australia)

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Reg 00	Risk assessment must be conducted for excursion
Reg 101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
Reg 165	offence to inadequately supervise children
Reg 167	offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Reg 168	Policies and procedures are required in relation to water safety, including safety during any water-based activities or excursions
Reg 170	Policies and procedures to be followed.

7 Definitions of Terms:

Term	Meaning
Active supervision	That an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation. In addition, knowing where all children are at all times, and monitoring their activities actively and diligently
DfE	Department for Education
Hazard	A hazard is an object, situation or behaviour that has the potential to cause physical or psychological harm or injury. A water hazard is defined as anything that can hold 5cm of water and fit a child's nose and mouth
Risk Assessment	The overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation.
Water Hazard	Anything that can hold 3cm of water and fit a child's nose and mouth

8 References:

Kidsafe and SA Department for Education 2025, "Water safety in education and care settings",

Department for Education Preschool Water Safety Policy October 2025

Department for Education Template for Local Water Safety Procedure

ACECQA, 2021, Water safety policy guidelines, accessed online (14/10/22) at url: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/preparing-nqf-policies-and-procedures>

9 Reviewing Strategy and History:

Review should be conducted every 3 years (in line with DfE timeframe) to ensure compliance with this procedure

Version No.	Reviewed By	Approved By	Approval Date	Review Notes
1	Management Committee Staff	Liam Fudali-Chairperson	22/5/13	New format
1.1	Management Committee Staff DECD	Lyn Rowberry-Chairperson	20/5/15	Updated referencing
2	Management Committee Staff	Melissa Smithen Chairperson	16/10/19	Inserted section 6 Legislation & Regulations Content changes to align with DfE procedure Updated referencing and review history

3	Management Committee Staff parents	Alison Curtis Chairperson	14/12/22	Content changes to Purpose; Procedures; Definitions Updated referencing and review history
1*	Management Committee Staff parents	Burcu Subasi Chairperson	13/5/26	Changed title to Procedure Major content changes to Purpose, Procedures, Added Roles & Responsibilities section Updated referencing and review history