



Wynn Vale Preschool

Water Safety Policy & Procedures

This policy and procedures have been developed in accordance with:

- Department for Education water safety for preschools guidelines
- National Quality Standard Regulations
- National Quality Framework – Quality Area 2 (Children’s Health & Safety) and Quality Area 3 (Physical Environment)
- ACECQA – Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority
- Kidsafe - Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia.

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for managing water safety, including safety during any water-based activities. According to Kidsafe, drowning continues to be one of the main causes of fatalities of Australian children with lack of supervision the most common contributing factor. A child can drown silently in as little as five centimetres of water, in less than twenty seconds.

Young children are most at risk of drowning because:

- They love to play with water and are naturally drawn to it
- They do not understand the danger
- They are top heavy (their head is large in comparison to their body) and they have a tendency to fall

Our water safety policy and procedures are in place to help keep children safe in and around water and support their learning in a safe environment. Children’s safety and well-being will be protected in and around water through supervision and education.

Water Hazards:

A water hazard is anything that can hold 5cm of water and fit a child’s nose and mouth. There are a number of water hazards in our preschool learning environment, including:

- Kitchen and bathroom sinks, basins, bowls
- Water courses, sandpit, digging patch
- Water troughs, containers, baby baths and buckets used for play
- Pooling water

Managing Water Hazards

The safety, health and well-being of children is our number one priority. All water based activities will be adequately supervised and no child will be left unattended when in proximity to water.

Water based play is an important part of children’s healthy growth, learning, well-being and development. Our educators ensure that all precautions are employed to safeguard children during these experiences and all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to water safety.

We create opportunities for children to learn and develop. This includes incorporating water safety awareness into the educational programme.

Our water courses are designed so that the depth of the water, at any point, is less than 300mm. The water is directed into the sandpit and digging patch which have suitable drainage systems to avoid pooling.

A risk assessment [see attachment] has been completed to identify and assess risks associated with water hazards and water –based activities. This has helped to inform the following procedures for management of water hazards.

All educators will:

- Actively supervise children at all times when there is a risk of access to any water hazard. Active supervision includes:
 - Direct and constant monitoring of children – within arm's length [within 1 – 2 metres]
 - Positioning themselves carefully and intentionally
 - Scanning and moving around the area
 - Listening closely for sounds or the absence of noise
 - Observing play and anticipating behaviour
- Eliminate hazards – water will be emptied immediately after use and vessels stored in a manner that prevents them filling with water when not in use.
- Consider aspects of the environment to ensure adequate drainage of water to avoid pooling
- Consider the positioning of water play equipment to reduce trip hazards e.g. Set up of water troughs on soft fall areas, rather than on concrete paths
- Restrict access:
 - Water receptacles will be locked in the sheds when not in use
 - Plugs removed from inside trough and bathroom basins
 - Kitchen gate will be closed with the bolt returned when unattended by adults
- Inspect outdoor environments for potential water hazards, particularly during and after wet weather
- Maintain an approved first aid qualification, including annual CPR training

This policy and procedures was prepared in consultation with preschool staff on 2nd March 2022 and once approved by Governing Council, a copy will be stored in the Preschool Policy Folder. Another copy, accessible to family members, will be kept in the Parent Information Folder.

Endorsed by Wynn Vale School Governing Council:

Chairperson Signature: _____

Date: 21/03/2022

Date for review: **March 2024**