

Emergency and Evacuation Policy

Commitment to Quality Learning

Our service has a duty of care to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of every child, educator, family member, and visitor. Emergencies can arise suddenly and unexpectedly, which is why we are committed to careful planning and preparation. By ensuring that all staff members are confident in responding to emergencies, we can act quickly and effectively to minimise risks and maintain a safe environment.

Regulatory and Ethical Framework

This policy is informed by the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, the National Quality Standard (2025), and the ECA Code of Ethics. It is also guided by My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care, which highlights the importance of creating environments where children feel secure, supported, and respected. Our procedures ensure that every emergency is managed with a focus on children's safety, dignity, and wellbeing.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out clear and effective procedures for managing emergencies and evacuations. We aim to identify risks, minimise hazards, and continually review our systems through regular risk assessments. Our approach not only ensures compliance with regulations but also builds resilience in children by giving them opportunities to practice emergency responses in a calm and supportive way.

Scope

This policy applies to all children, families, educators, staff, management, and visitors to the service. Everyone in our community plays an important role in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children during emergencies.

Understanding Emergencies

An emergency is defined as an unexpected event or situation that poses a significant risk to the health, safety, or wellbeing of children or adults, or to the premises itself. Examples of emergencies may include fire, flood, storms, gas leaks, dangerous animals, medical incidents, or external threats such as terrorism or accidents in the surrounding area. Each service location may face unique risks, and our plans are tailored to reflect the needs of our environment.

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Emergency Preparedness and Planning

To ensure preparedness, our service maintains a detailed Emergency and Evacuation Plan, which is prominently displayed throughout the premises. Floor plans, exit routes, and clearly marked assembly areas are visible in both indoor and outdoor areas. Exits are kept clear at all times, and emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, and evacuation bags are maintained and checked regularly in line with Australian Safety Standards. All educators, including relief staff and volunteers, receive training on our procedures during induction. Ongoing training ensures that every staff member understands their role in the event of an emergency. Regular rehearsals are conducted every three months, with additional spontaneous drills throughout the year. Each rehearsal is documented, reviewed, and reflected upon to support continuous improvement of our procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider holds ultimate responsibility for making decisions about evacuation and liaising with emergency services. Educators are responsible for calmly leading children and visitors to safety, collecting attendance records, medical management plans, and first aid resources, and providing reassurance throughout the process. Families are asked to keep their contact details updated and to follow the directions of staff during emergencies or drills.

Family Communication and Partnerships

Families are kept informed about our emergency procedures and are notified whenever drills are conducted. Following any emergency or evacuation, educators and leaders provide clear information to families about the event, the safety of their children, and any next steps. By working together, we ensure that families feel reassured and confident in the safety measures we have in place.

Supporting Children's Wellbeing During Emergencies

Emergencies and natural disasters can be stressful experiences. Children rely on adults to provide reassurance, calm guidance, and opportunities to share their feelings. Our educators are trained to support children's emotional wellbeing during and after emergencies. We work with families and external organisations, such as Emerging Minds and BeYou, to provide resources and trauma-informed support when needed.

Natural Disasters

In accordance with Section 219A of the National Law (NSW), the service may be directed to cease operations on a temporary basis in the event of an emergency, including but not limited to natural disasters, to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children, staff, and families.

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Continuous Improvement

After every drill or emergency, educators reflect on what went well and what could be improved. These reflections are recorded in staff meeting minutes and our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Regular consultation with families, schools, and emergency authorities ensures our procedures remain effective and responsive to the needs of our community.

Access to Information

This policy, along with evacuation maps and emergency contact numbers, is available at all times in prominent areas of the service. Families are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the procedures and ask questions if they would like further clarification.

Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with current legislation, regulations, and best practice. Reviews take into account staff feedback, family input, outcomes of emergency drills, and advice from emergency authorities.

Child Safe Standards and Paramountcy Principle

The Service is committed to upholding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and embedding a strong child safe culture across all practices. In accordance with the Paramountcy Principle, the safety, wellbeing and best interests of the child are the primary and overriding consideration in all decisions, actions and practices undertaken by the Service, including the management of emergencies and evacuations.

This means that in any emergency situation, the immediate safety and wellbeing of children will take precedence over all other considerations. Educators, staff and management are required to exercise professional judgement and take all reasonable precautions to protect children from harm and hazards, ensuring that emergency and evacuation procedures are implemented promptly, effectively and in a calm and controlled manner.

The Service will ensure that all emergency responses prioritise the safe evacuation or protection of children, maintain adequate supervision, and minimise distress. Educators will provide reassurance and clear guidance to children, supporting both their physical safety and emotional wellbeing during and after an emergency. Decisions made during emergencies will reflect a commitment to protecting children, including seeking emergency assistance where required and following established procedures without delay.

All practices relating to emergency and evacuation management must prioritise the protection of children from harm, uphold their dignity and wellbeing, and ensure they feel safe, supported and cared for at all times



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Review

Date:	Changes:	Reviewed by:
26/11/2021	New policy (All updated)	Charmayne Nathan
04/07/2024	No changes - reviewed	Charmayne Nathan
15/09/25	Policy was updated, information was condensed.	Charmayne Nathan
23/04/26	Updated in the lines of the new Laws and Regulations	Annika Daniel
24/4/26	Child Safe Standards & Paramountcy Principle was implemented in align with new laws and regulations	Charmayne Nathan