

FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT SAFETY POLICY

Under the Education and Care Services National Law we have a responsibility to protect the health and safety of children enrolled at our Out of Schools Hours Care (OSHC) Service. Whilst risk management is included in our health and safety policies, we understand our responsibility in providing a safe environment for all children and the need to check all equipment and furniture regularly to minimise risks to all those entering the Service.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
3.1.1	Fit for Purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
174	Time to notify certain circumstances to the Regulatory Authority
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

RELATED POLICIES

Child Safe Environment Policy Health and Safety Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy	Physical Environment Policy Supervision Policy Work Health and Safety Policy
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PURPOSE

Management and educators have a responsibility and duty of care to ensure the building, furniture, grounds, and equipment are safe and hygienic. We aim to ensure that all furniture and equipment at the OSHC Service adheres to recognised safety standards and is age appropriate for the children.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the OSHC Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service understands the importance of children experiencing and learning about risk through safe and creative play. The provision of safe environments for children is essential to prevent injury and enable them to explore and develop new skills. Our OSHC Service will only use furniture and equipment that has been made in accordance with Australian design standards.

MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE:

- a proactive process of risk management is implemented, and clear processes are in place for the identification of hazards, risk minimisation and other control measures
- daily/weekly routine visual inspections are made to identify obvious hazards in surfacing, fixed and mobile equipment, moving parts, swings, ropes, chains, tyres, fences, sandpits
- a qualified person is employed on an annual basis to complete comprehensive inspections of outdoor equipment including:
 - timber structures
 - swings
 - ropes, chains, tyres
 - metal frames
 - slides and linking items
 - playground surfacing and impact areas
- records are kept of inspections and maintenance of furniture, playgrounds and equipment
- educators and staff are aware of their responsibility to identify hazards and potential risks, conduct safety checks of all equipment and furniture and abide by Work Health and Safety requirements
- mandatory Australian Safety Standards are always adhered to when
 - purchasing new equipment or furniture
 - installing equipment (for example: equipment footings, clustering equipment, free height fall, swings)

- the equipment and furniture used in providing education and care at the Service is safe, clean and in good repair
- to adhere to the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations and licensing requirements that relate to the safety of children at the Service
- there is sufficient furniture and developmentally appropriate equipment so each child can take part in the educational program depending on their interests, ages and abilities
- educators are aware of appropriate instructions for use and supervision for all equipment and furniture
- furniture in the Service is securely built so it will not collapse, is easy to clean, and non-toxic.
- entrapment hazards are identified; it is easy for small fingers and limbs to get caught in gaps. Head and upper body entrapments can cause death by asphyxiation. (Be aware that fingers can get caught in holes or openings between 5-12mm, limbs in gaps between 30-50mm and heads in gaps over 85mm.)
- to implement recommendations from organisations, such as Kidsafe, on fall zones and suitable heights of furniture, equipment and playground equipment (minimum height of equipment for fall zone is 500 mm)
- all equipment and furniture are kept in a clean and hygienic state, particularly before and after food service
- furniture and equipment do not contain any lead. This is most likely to occur with second-hand furniture
- the Regulatory Authority is notified of any serious incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child within 24 hours.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- provide effective supervision of children at all times to minimise the risk of accidents and injuries that could result from the furniture and equipment within the learning indoor and outdoor learning environment
- regularly check furniture and equipment for stability and wear and tear- (corners, surface- splinters, missing bike handle grips, faulty cleats in boards or ladders, heavy objects on climbing frames that destabilise the equipment)
- keep records of daily/weekly inspection of indoor/outdoor equipment
- keep an accurate record of any furniture or equipment that needs maintenance in the *Equipment and Maintenance Record* and ensure this is reported to management

- carefully consider all aspects regarding the use of furniture and equipment and how it suits the age and stage of the children’s development
- ensure the furnishings and equipment within the program support and stimulate children’s leisure and development
- reflect on common accidents and incidents in the learning environment and implement an action plan to ensure the safety of children and minimise accidents at the OSHC Service.
- provide a safe physical environment that allows children to play safely
- remain up to date with health and safety changes within the early childhood sector by attending appropriate professional development.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Child Care Centre Desktop (Child Care Forms- Audits and Checklists)

Equipment and Maintenance Record

Outdoor Environment and Playground Safety Audit

Outdoor Cleaning and Safety Checklist

Opening and Closing Checklist

SOURCE

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Competition & Consumer Commission. (n.d.). Product safety Australia: Mandatory standards: <https://www.productsafety.gov.au/product-safety-laws/safety-standards-bans/mandatory-standards>

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2011). *My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia*

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (2020).

Kidsafe NSW Inc. Home and community safety information sheets:

<https://www.kidsafensw.org/resources/information-sheets/>

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	AUGUST 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE	AUGUST 2022
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional QA added (QA 3) • Minor formatting changes • sources checked for currency • Reference to outdoor environment and playground safety audit added- Child Care Centre Desktop 		

POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
AUGUST 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• reworded introduction• Additional regulations added• risk management inclusions• notification to Regulatory Authority included• sources checked for currency	AUGUST 2021
OCTOBER 2019	New policy OSHC	AUGUST 2020