



P.O. Box 1050, Woden, ACT, 2606
 Ph: 6281 3121 Fax: 3281 7077
 Email: wodenecc@tpg.com.au

LOCKDOWN POLICY

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

<i>Document number:</i> QA7-L1	<i>Version:</i> 3
<i>Date of issue:</i> Nov 2017	<i>Contact:</i> Reesha Stefek
<i>Date of review:</i> July 2019	

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.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law Act 2010	
97	Emergency and Evacuation procedures
98	Telephone or other communication equipment
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures

Introduction

This policy covers the procedures and personnel responsibilities when Woden Early Childhood Centre (WECC) is required to go into lockdown. This policy is designed to ensure that children and educators are safe in situations where there is a hazard in WECC's grounds or outside WECC that requires children and educators to be locked within buildings for their own safety.

The probability of circumstances necessitating a lockdown is extremely low. The most likely situation that would trigger a lockdown would be dangerous intruder on WECC's grounds; but may also occur in hazardous situations such as a chemical spill or fire, which make it dangerous for children, educators and visitors to be outside.

Responsibility and point of contact

WECC's Nominated Supervisor or Director.

Scope

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

Goals – What are we aiming to do?

This policy ensures that under particular circumstances, WECC has appropriate procedures in place to affect a lockdown, and those procedures are able to maintain the safety and wellbeing of those at WECC.

Lockdown means that all windows and external doors are locked, and where possible internal doors are locked, with children and adults being moved to a room/position that does not allow them to be viewed.

We have set procedures to follow in the event of any emergency requiring evacuation and lock down. These procedures comply with regulatory requirements and are consistent with recommendations by recognised authorities. They are designed to ensure the safe and calm evacuation of all children, staff, families and visitors.

Examples of situations that may require the facility to go into 'lockdown' include:

- Severe storms
- Extreme smoke from distant bushfire
- Chemical or hazardous substance spill
- Gas leak / atmospheric hazardous substance
- Dangerous animal or insects
- Potentially dangerous intruder/unwanted or uninvited visitor
- Potentially violent/dangerous person due to intoxication or substance abuse
- Unidentified external disturbance

Strategies – How will it be done?

Role of the Nominated Supervisor or Director

Upon recognising that a situation calls for lockdown, the Nominated Supervisor or Director will lock the office (pull curtains and blinds), sound a uniquely and instantly recognisable alarm and ring the police (000), alerting them of the emergency. The Nominated Supervisor or Director will then assume lockdown position themselves in the office while maintaining phone contact with the police. When the Nominated Supervisor or Director is advised by police that the threat has been averted, the all clear is to be sounded.

The Nominated Supervisor or Director will:

- nominate the person/people with authority to manage the lockdown
- determine communication channels
- determine how the lockdown alert signal will be given – a code message or song
- design a movement and wellbeing plan to follow if not in the classroom
- develop an effective strategy for conducting the roll and communicating with children, educators, families and visitors of the Service
- document roles and responsibilities of staff and educators

- plan to maintain children's safety
- ensure all children, staff, families and visitors of the Service remain inside
- ensure children remain in a confined area, or out of sight during the lockdown period
- schedule practice emergency drills at least every 3 months (Reg 97) and ensure all educators are clear about the procedure before the drill takes place
- review and reflect on each emergency drill to ensure strategies are effective

Educators will:

- make every effort to lock doors and windows
- follow the lockdown procedure for their room (located on the back of the Fire Safety Instructions)
- remind children of the lockdown procedure during the year, on a regular basis

Lockdown procedures

In the event of a building lockdown, the following procedures will be followed.

- all children and adults must remain in the room they are in. Children and adults who are outside but near the building are to move into the closest occupied room
- educators who are on their breaks at the start of the lockdown should go to the nearest room. Educators should check outside areas for children and direct them to the nearest room and invite known visitors into the room with them.
- if children, a class or an adult is caught outside a room when the alarm is sounded, they must immediately go to the closest room; joining whoever is in that room, before the room is locked down
- any curtains in the room must be closed. Children should be positioned on the floor against the door, wall or in the most non-visible positions (pre-determined)
- appropriate spaces should have already been identified and displayed on an Emergency Lockdown Procedure (information can be displayed on the back of the Fire Safety Instructions, which can be taken from the wall when required. Note: this will ensure that in a situation involving unwanted visitors, the plan is not visible or available to them)
- where possible, access should be maintained to a bathroom and enough space should be available for children to be comfortably involved in quiet activities
- the above procedure should be worked out for each room by the Nominated Supervisor or Director and the Room Leader and communicated to educators
- no one is permitted to use the room phone
- children and adults must remain quiet
- no one is to open the door under any circumstances
- everyone must remain in this position until the "all clear" is announced (this will be done by use of a second unique and instantly recognisable alarm)
- after the all clear is sounded the Nominated Supervisor or Director is able to authorise the contacting of parents

For parents

On the very rare occasion that a lockdown is required at WECC, the Nominated Supervisor or Director will notify parents as soon as possible after the lockdown via email or OWNA.

In the event that parents become aware of the lockdown before it has concluded, they are requested not to come to WECC, as **children will not be released to parents during lockdown**. Parents are also asked not to call WECC as this may tie up emergency lines that must remain open and the lockdown requires silence to ensure an intruder is not alerted to the presence of children and educators in rooms. If any child's stay at WECC is extended beyond the regular time, the child's parent/s will receive information about the time and place they can pick up their child. Please be assured in the event of lockdown that **the overriding consideration for WECC is the safety and well-being of the children**.

Intruder procedures

From time to time, educators may be confronted by an intruder in WECC's grounds or may need to confront someone who does not appear to have any legitimate reason for being on site. In such a case, the following procedure must be used:

- when confronting an intruder, take another educator with you (as “backup”)
- determine who will initiate contact with the intruder and who will be the back-up person. If possible include a third educator so that you can form a triangle around the intruder. This will put you in a stronger defensive position
- ask another educator who is not involved to call the Nominated Supervisor or Director
- use a system of nonverbal communications or hand signals using just one hand. For example:
 - 1 finger = back-up educator may leave
 - 2 fingers = back-up educator to stay on the scene
 - 3 fingers = both educators should break off contact and leave when safe to do so
 - fist = presence of a potential weapon. Both educators should break off contact and leave when it is safe to do so
- attempt to direct the intruder to the car park. Use casual conversation or body language to calmly direct the situation
- if the intruder refuses to cooperate, do not escalate the situation. Leave and call the police
- if the intruder shows a weapon, assure him/her that it is not necessary for him/her to consider using the weapon
 - back away slowly and leave the area
 - both of your hands should be up with your palms facing the intruder while slowly backing away
- as soon as it is safe to do so, report the situation to the Nominated Supervisor or Director, who may determine that a lockdown is necessary

Evaluation

Management and educators will monitor and review the effectiveness of the lockdown policy every two years. Updated information will be incorporated as needed.

Related policies /documents

- *Child protection*
- *Critical Incident*
- *Emergency and Evacuation*
- *Risk management procedures*
- *Safe storage of dangerous goods*

Statutory legislation and considerations

- Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011
- WorkHealth and Safety Regulation 2011 Regulation 43

Sources and references

- The Business of Childcare, Karen Kearns 2004
- National Quality Standard
- Managing Emergency Situations in Education and Care Services
- Revised National Quality Standard

Authorisation

Jennifer Hayes
 President
 2019 WECC Management Committee