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WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.1.3	Healthy Lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child
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, practised and implemented.
2.2.3	Child Protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law Act 2010	
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
83	Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
168	Policies and procedures are required in relation to health and safety
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

Introduction

Woden Early Childhood Centre (WECC) has an ongoing commitment to providing a safe and healthy environment for all people who attend the premises, including educators, children, parents/guardians, students, volunteers, contractors and visitors. The Approved Provider (the Management Committee), as the employer of educators, will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of educators at the Centre.

We believe that the provision of a safe working and learning environment for children, families, staff, and visitors are an integral and essential responsibility during the Centre operation. Work Health and Safety regulations require the Approved Provider to eliminate risks in the workplace or if that is not reasonably practicable, minimise the risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

Our Centre has a duty to consult with staff, visitors and families about work health and safety requirements and develop comprehensive policies and procedures to manage risks and hazards appropriately and effectively. All employees have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and to not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

Scope

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

Goals

WECC will reduce the:

- number of hazards in the Centre's environment
- consequences of risks present in WECC's service environment
- number of accidents, injuries and reportable incidents
- cost of workers' compensation claims by WECC

Workers Compensation Obligations

Approved Providers will ensure the following to facilitate compliance of WH&S Laws and regulations relating to Workers Compensation obligations:

1. Hold workers compensation insurance
2. Provide information relating to how employees can make a claim. This may include displaying a poster relating to injuries at work.
3. Provide information to employees regarding a return-to-work program.
4. Ensure staff incident reports are completed for all near-miss injuries or injuries, complete an injury register to record near-miss injuries and injuries.
5. Ensure staff injuries are reported to workers compensation insurer and state/territory WorkSafe within 48 hours.

Support the employee with the following

- a. Assist with Dr appointment and certificate of capacity

b. Identify suitable duties based on certificate of capacity

c. Consider modification of existing duties

d. Consider modify of the workplace

7. Assist with participation of workers injury management plan upon return to work in consultation with insurer and medical practitioner, including providing suitable work conditions and alternative suitable employment if pre-injury role is unsuitable.

Strategies

The Nominated Supervisor or Director will:

- apply 'due diligence' at all times to maintain a safe and healthy Centre environment and thereby protect all those involved from any potentially adverse health and safety effects
- ensure that the Management Committee takes all reasonable steps to eliminate or minimise all hazards within WECC
- promoting dignity and respect within the Centre and take action to prevent and respond to bullying in its workplace
- implementing a strategic approach to health and safety by using measurable objectives to monitor performance
- ensure that workplace health and safety is a shared responsibility, and everyone is required to assist in identifying any potential risks or hazards
- ensure that all educators will take reasonable care to protect their own safety in the workplace and avoid adversely affecting the health, safety and welfare of any other person through any act of omission, neglect or misconduct at work
- ensure that individual educators are aware that they are responsible for reporting all hazards, and workplace injuries immediately
- maintain a maintenance log on our Centre app.
- meaningful consultation with staff regarding work health and safety issues
- providing an effective and accessible safety management procedure for all employees to guide safe working and learning in all workplaces
- reporting incidents and accidents in accordance with National Regulations and Centre policy requirements to ensure action can be taken to manage the incident or accidents, prevent further incident and accidents and provide support where required
- ensure adequate financial, physical and human resources are allocated to support the implementation of a workplace safety management system (Appendix 1)
- apply WECC's workplace safety management system to all persons employed fulltime, part time and/or casually as well as those contracted by WECC (that is, full time, part time and/or casual) as well as to all persons at or near WECC (for example, clients, suppliers, visitors, volunteers, students, etc.)
- consult with government agencies, unions and other peak industry bodies to ensure workplace safety management system meets the requirements of WorkSafe ACT
- ensure that this workplace health and safety policy is:
 - discussed with all workers on induction
 - included in the staff and parent handbook
 - discussed with contractors, students, suppliers, visitors and volunteers to WECC
- ensure consultation with, and involvement by, all educators in implementing WECC's risk management approach to workplace health and safety
- ensure effective workplace health and safety information, instruction, training and supervision is provided to educators, regulations, and codes of practices, and to facilitate the identification of unsafe workplace practices
- ensure that WECC's workplace safety management system conforms to take into account the requirements of relevant legislation, regulations, and codes of practice, advisory standards and Australian Standards where they apply
- ensure that WECC provides a safe and healthy environment by developing documented procedures for:
 - first aid

- emergency and evacuation
- incident, injury, trauma and illness
- record management
- risk management procedures
- ensure that WECC reviews this policy and WECC's performance against the stated objectives annually and/or in line with any changes to legislative/regulatory requirements, ensuring that all educators are consulted and notified of any change(s)
- ensure that educators are aware that WECC is committed to providing injured educators with effective rehabilitation programs to ensure their recovery and return to work at pre-injury capacity, wherever possible

The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will ensure:

- Service policies and procedures are being followed and adhered to
- workplace incidents are reported and investigated to ascertain the circumstances of the incident or accident, and take appropriate action to prevent further incidents from occurring
- comply with any reasonable instruction or lawful direction, including wearing personal protective equipment supplied by the employer as required
- report any incidents and hazards, and participate in training and consultation with the support of management
- that if an incident, situation or event does occur and presents imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of any person presents at the Service or if an ambulance was called in response to the incident/situation (not as a precaution) the regulatory authority will be notified within 24 hours of the incident
- that the health and safety of children, families and visitors of the Service are not at risk of harm
- they observe, implement and fulfil the responsibilities under the current Work Health and Safety Act
- they follow the correct manual handling procedures
- they take practical steps for their own health and safety and of others affected by their actions at work
- work areas are safe and help reduce accidents to themselves and others
- Management and or WHS Office of any incidents and accidents in the work place as soon as practicable
- all safety checklists are implemented as required on a regular basis
- correct record keeping procedures for incidents and accidents etc. including the Quality Improvement Plan and WHS reporting folder are followed
- to report any potential and actual hazards in the work place to the WHS officer
- children's equipment is regularly checked
- always supervise children store all dangerous chemicals appropriately
- keep children out of kitchen areas
- ensure all power points have safety plugs
- do not have hot drinks around children
- shut and lock all gates behind you
- clean up all spills immediately (to prevent slipping)

Families and visitors are to:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety
- report health and safety issues and participate in consultation in work health and safety affecting them
- follow service policies and procedures in relation to work health and safety

Health and Safety Representatives

Our educators and staff will designate Health and Safety Representatives. If a request is made for a Health and Safety Representative, the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will:

- initiate consultation with workers about the number of Health Safety Representatives required
- give all educators and staff the chance to nominate a Health and Safety Representative and to choose in order to determine if there is more than one contender
- notify workers of the outcomes of the consultation as soon as possible

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor must keep a current list of all Health and Safety Representatives and display a copy at the workplace.

A Health and Safety Representative can:

- inspect the workplaces as directed by management
- be present at an interview with a worker that the HSR represents (with their consent) and the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor or an inspector about health and safety issues
- monitor compliance measures by the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor
- enquire into any risk to the health or safety of workers at the service

WECC will ensure Health and Safety Representatives are:

- never prevented from carrying out their duties
- able to give people assisting them access to the workplace
- can take paid leave to attend their health and safety duties
- can take paid leave to attend an initial work health and safety course or annual refresher training approved by the regulator within 3 months of their request to attend. The service will pay the course costs and reasonable expenses
- can access any resources, facilities and assistance that they reasonably require to undertake their duties

Health and Safety Representatives are elected for 12 months unless they leave the Service, are disqualified or, resign. They are not personally liable for anything done, or not done, in good faith while carrying out their role.

Duty of Care

A duty of care is the legal obligation to provide reasonable care while performing any acts or making any omissions that could foreseeably harm others.

The duty encompasses a wide range of matters, including (but not limited to):

- provision of adequate supervision
- ensuring grounds, premises and equipment are safe for children's use
- implementing strategies to prevent bullying and
- providing medical assistance (if competent to do so) or seeking assistance from a medically trained person to aid a child who is injured or becomes ill at the service.

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will ensure all practical steps are taken to certify the health and safety of all educators, staff, volunteers, children, their families and any other people impacted by the Service operations. This includes ascertaining and eliminating or decreasing all realistically foreseeable hazards and providing suitable training and instruction for employees to ensure health and safety. Educators, staff and volunteers will also take reasonable care for their own health and safety, ensuring their conduct does not adversely affect the health and safety of other people.

Manual Handling

WECC refers to the Manual Handling Code of Practice as part of our commitment to ensure a best practice approach. All staff members are required to undertake Workplace Health and Safety Training that will continue

to be updated to ensure safety.

Educators are at risk of work related ergonomic injuries, particularly back injuries, through carrying children, bending, reaching and not using adult sized furniture.

To prevent this, Educators are to be attentive to:

- use adult height utilities and equipment, including sinks and change tables
- use small chairs with good back support instead of squatting or bending for interaction with children
- use an adult feed chair for feeding infants, or sit in a low chair with good back support at child level
- use drop side cots
- use beds that are light weight and stackable with washable mattresses
- have shelving, filing cabinets and storage cupboards at a suitable height to avoid stretching to reach them
- use child sized ladders for nappy changing
- where possible kneel rather than bend to avoid back problems
- carry children only when necessary, in the correct way – with one arm under the child's buttocks and the other arm supporting the child's back. At the same time hold the child facing you, as close to your body as possible. Try to avoid carrying a child on your hip because this will strain your back
- be careful to lift with a balanced and comfortable posture when lifting awkward loads
- minimise the need to reach above shoulder level and use a step ladder
- avoid extended reaching forward e.g. leaning into low equipment boxes. Share the load if the equipment is heavy, long or awkward
- ask for help and organise a team lift when sliding, pulling or pushing equipment
- use equipment and furniture that can be moved around safely, easily and as comfortable as possible
- place lighter items higher on shelves
- where possible arrange children's activities, sleep around furniture (if indoors) and equipment to minimise manual handling
- minimise lifting of children by having steps/foot stools/ ladders in areas where lifting of children is likely to be needed, such as nappy change rooms

Hazardous Materials

We strive to minimise the health and safety risks associated with the handling and storage of hazardous materials. We adopt a risk management strategy that enables practices that minimise the risk of harm, injury or illness caused by any hazardous material.

As far as is reasonably practical, WECC will:

- provide the least hazardous chemical, product or equipment for the task without jeopardising hygiene
- ensure that staff, contractors, visitors and students are protected from both short and long-term health effects of hazardous substances and processes
- ensure all staff, contractors, visitors and students have access to Safety Data Sheets and adequate training on the safe use and storage of all hazardous substances prior to any exposure to the substances
- ensure that non-toxic plants are planted within the workplace and undertake regular garden and grounds maintenance to minimise the risk of toxic plants within the grounds and premises

Risky Play

Educators will provide an environment that encourages children to effectively learn in play which involves and immerses them to take risks. No play space is risk free. It is important for children's development to become adventurous and create opportunities to explore and test their own capacities, manage risk, and to grow as capable, resourceful and resilient people

As educators we will talk to the children when they are playing with encouragement for them to test their abilities. When we find children exploring risky play, educators will supervise and assist where appropriate.

Definitions and expectations under the New Workplace Legislation 2012

Person conducting a business or undertaking

A person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) includes a retailer, wholesaler, manufacturer, importer, owner-driver, manager of a shopping centre, principal contractor of a construction site, sub-contractors engaged by a principal contractor, service station owner, fast food franchisor and franchisee, self employed person, government department or agency, local council, sporting club that employs bar and restaurant staff, private school, clothing manufacturer, an owner builder who engages someone to undertake work and similar vocations.

WECC is regarded as a PCBU within the workplace safety framework

Workers

A person will be considered to be a worker under the workplace health and safety laws if that person carries out work for a PCBU

A worker includes any educator, labourer or hire staff, volunteer, apprentice, work experience student, sub-contractor, contractor apprentice, trainee and outworker

As a worker you must:

- care for your own health and safety, as well as that of others
- comply with any reasonable instruction from the person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU), so far as you are reasonably able
- cooperate with all reasonable policies and procedures of the (PCBU)

Evaluation

WECC is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and healthy environment for its staff, children, families and visitors. We strive to make WECC as free of foreseeable risks as is reasonably practical while remaining true to our vision and our mission.

Related policies /documents

- *Anaphylaxis management*
- *Animals in the environment*
- *Asthma management*
- *Emergency and evacuation*
- *First aid*
- *Harassment-free workplace*
- *Hygiene and infection control*
- *Incident, injury, trauma and illness*
- *Induction of new educators*
- *Infectious disease*
- *Lockdown*
- *Nutrition, food, beverages and dietary requirements*
- *Record management*
- *Return to work (WRI)*
- *Risk management procedures*
- *Safe storage of dangerous goods*
- *Smoke-free environment*
- *Staff code of conduct*
- *Sun protection*
- *Supervision*
- *Volunteers and students*
- *Water safety*

Statutory legislation and considerations

- Workplace Health and Safety Act 2012
- WorkSafe ACT 2012

Sources and references

- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2015
- ECA Code of Ethics
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority
- Guide to the National Quality Standard
- Staying Healthy in Education and Care 5th Edition

Policy Reviewed	September 2022	Ratified Date	Next Review Date
Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition to the education and care services national regulations• Minor wording edits• Sources reviewed and checked• Addition of modifications table	Sept 2022	Sept 2025
Policy Reviewed	August 2019	Ratified Date	Next Review Date
Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing policy	Aug 2019	Aug 21
Policy Reviewed	September 2013	Ratified Date	Next Review Date
Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing policy	Sept 2013	Sept 2015

Authorisation

Paul Halloran
President
2021-22 WECC Management Committee

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM¹

A Workplace Health and Safety Management System is a set of places, actions and procedures to manage health and safety in the workplace that is actively endorsed by the employer. The system will allow for the provision of a safe and healthy workplace and the prevention/reduction of illness and injury equally for educators, children, families and visitors and contractors.

The system provides for:

- identification of workplace hazards, assessment and control of all risks
- active involvement in health and safety matters by employers, the Nominated Supervisor or Director, educators and their representatives
- provision of information and or training for educators at all levels so they can work safely
- audit and review of the Workplace Health and Safety Management System

The system has six key elements:

1. A commitment to workplace health and safety
2. Planning process
3. Consultation or stakeholders
4. Implementation
5. Measurement
6. Review

The Workplace Health and Safety Management System follows a simple WHY, WHAT, HOW format. For example:

- Why are we required to do this?
- What has the centre put in place to meet this requirement?
- How do you implement this requirement?

The system is made up of the following items:

- procedures
- guidelines
- tools
- checklists
- forms

A Workplace Health and Safety Management System provides a systematic way to identify hazards and control risks while maintaining assurance that these risk controls are effective.

The system can be defined as a businesslike approach to safety. It is a systematic, explicit and comprehensive process for managing safety risks. As with all management systems, a safety management system provides for goal setting, planning, and measuring performance. A safety management system is woven into the fabric of an organisation. It becomes part of the culture; the way people do their jobs.

For the purposes of defining safety management, safety can be defined as – the reduction of risk to a level that is as low as is reasonably practicable.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Safety_management_systems

There are three imperatives for adopting a safety management system for a business – these are ethical, legal and financial.

There is an implied moral obligation placed on an employer to ensure that work activities and the place of work to be safe. There are legislative requirements defined in just about every jurisdiction on how this is to be achieved and there is a substantial body of research which shows that effective safety management (which is the reduction of risk in the workplace) can reduce the financial exposure of an organisation by reducing direct and indirect costs associated with accident and incidents.

To address these three important elements, an effective SMS should:

- define how the organisation is set up to manage risk
- identify workplace risk and implement suitable controls
- implement effective communications across all levels of the organisation
- implement a process to identify and correct non-conformities
- implement a continual improvement process