

HDKA promotes a commitment to child safety, wellbeing, participation, empowerment, cultural safety and awareness including children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and/or communities and children from cultural and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

HDKA has a zero tolerance of child abuse and a duty of care to prevent and manage child abuse risks including physical and online environments.

Purpose

This policy will provide a framework for:

- The development of specific emergency and evacuation procedures, practices and guidelines at services operated by Horsham and District Kindergarten Association.
- Raising the awareness of everyone attending services operated by Horsham and District Kindergarten Association about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.

Values

HDKA is committed to:

- Providing a safe environment for all children, staff and persons participating in programs at services operated by Horsham and District Kindergarten Association.
- Having a plan to manage emergency situations in a way that reduces risk to those present on the premises.
- Ensuring effective procedures are in place to manage emergency incidents at the service.
- Ensuring an appropriate response during and following emergency incidents to meet the needs of the children, their families, staff and others at the service.

Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents or guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of services operated by Horsham and District Kindergarten Association, including during offsite excursions and activities.

Background

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* define an emergency in relation to an education and care service as any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the service premises such as flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down.

Comprehensive emergency management includes prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Services are required to have policies and procedures in place detailing what needs to be done in an emergency, including an emergency and evacuation floor plan. These policies and procedures must be based on a risk assessment that identifies potential emergencies relevant to the service (Regulation 97).

Early childhood services have a duty of care to the children, staff, volunteers, students, visitors and all attending the facility. It is also a requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities or programs.

All services in Victoria are required to have an *Emergency Management Plan* (EMP) as part of their everyday 'best practice' operations. The Department of Education and Training (DET) provides *Emergency Management Plan Guidelines* and an *Emergency Management Plan* template to assist services develop and review their EMP (refer to *Sources* below for the link). All services must

complete the required sections of the plan and lodge it with the relevant DET regional office. A copy should also be attached to this policy.

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 97, 98, 168(2)(e)
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety
 - Standard 2.3: Each child is protected
 - Element 2.3.3 – Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

Definitions

Attendance record: Kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering and collecting the child or of the Nominated Supervisor or educator (Regulation 158(1)).

Duty of care: A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

Emergency: Includes any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the education and care service premises such as flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down (National Regulations, page 5).

Emergency Management Plan (EMP): A written set of instructions to assist the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and staff to deal with incidents or situations that could pose a threat to life, health or property. *Emergency Management Plan Guidelines* and an *Emergency Management Plan* template are available on the DET website (refer to *Sources* below).

Hazard: A source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record: Contains details of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs while the child is being educated and cared for by the service. Any incident, injury, trauma or illness must be recorded as soon as is practicable but not later than 24 hours after the occurrence. Details required include the:

- Name and age of the child.
- Circumstances leading to the incident, injury, trauma or illness (including any symptoms).
- Time and date.
- Details of action taken by the service including any medication administered, first aid provided or medical personnel contacted.
- Details of any witnesses.
- Names of any person the service notified or attempted to notify, and the time and date of this.
- Signature of the person making the entry, and time and date of this.

These details must be kept for the period of time specified in Regulation 183. A sample *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is available on the ACECQA website.

Mandatory closure: When services identified as being at high bushfire risk are directed by DET to close on days declared a Code Red Fire Danger Rating day.

Country Fire Authority (CFA): provide a fire and rescue service and are the first to respond to specific medical emergencies. The CFA aims to reduce the incidence and impact of fire and other emergencies on the community. This is achieved through the delivery of educational strategies that assist the community to become more self-reliant, including:

- Fire safety building inspections and checking fire fighting equipment.
- Delivering community awareness, education and safety programs.

Notifiable incident: An incident involving workplace health and safety that is required by law to be reported to WorkSafe Victoria. Notification is required for incidents that result in death or serious injury or illness, or dangerous occurrences. For a complete list of incidents that must be reported to WorkSafe Victoria, refer to the *Guide to Incident Notification* on the WorkSafe Victoria website:

www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

Risk management: A structured approach to managing uncertainty related to a threat; a sequence of activities including the identification, assessment and prioritisation of risks followed by co-ordinated and economical application of resources to minimise, monitor and control the probability and/or impact of those risks.

Serious incident: is defined in Regulation 12 as:

- The death of a child while being educated and cared for by the services.
- Any incident involving an injury or trauma or the illness of a child that requires or ought to have required:
 - Attention of a registered medical practitioner, or
 - Attendance at a hospital.
 - Examples include whooping cough, broken limb, anaphylaxis reaction.
- Any incident requiring attendance by emergency services.
- A circumstance where a child appears to be missing, is unaccounted for, has been removed from the service contrary to the Regulations, or has been locked in or out of the service premises.

The approved provider must notify the Regulatory Authority (DET) in writing within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the service (Regulation 176(s)(a)). The *Notification of serious incident form* is to be completed and submitted online using the National Quality Agenda IT System (NZA ITS). Records are required to be retained for the periods specified in Regulation 183.

State Emergency Service (SES): Volunteer-based organisation responding to emergencies and working to ensure the safety of communities around Victoria.

State of emergency: A situation in which the government is granted special powers, by constitutional or legal provision, to deal with a perceived threat to law and order, or public safety.

WorkSafe Victoria: The manager of Victoria's workplace safety system. WorkSafe Victoria's responsibilities are to:

- Help avoid workplace injuries occurring.
- Enforce Victoria's occupational health and safety laws.
- Provide reasonably priced workplace injury insurance for employers.

Sources

- Australian Standards: Emergency control organisation for buildings, structures and workplaces (AS 3745–2002).
- [Department of Education and Training, Guide to developing your Emergency Management Plan for use by early childhood services and non-government schools](#)
- Metropolitan Fire Brigade: www.mfb.vic.gov.au
- Country Fire Authority: www.cfa.vic.gov.au
- State Emergency Service: www.ses.vic.gov.au

- WorkSafe Victoria: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

Service policies

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Administration of Medication Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

Procedures

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Completing the DET *Emergency Management Plan* (refer to *Sources* for the link), lodging this with the relevant DET regional office and attaching a copy to this policy.
- Conducting a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that the service may encounter (Regulation 97(2)) (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Developing instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency (Regulation 97(1)(a)) (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Appointing an Incident Management Team (IMT) to oversee safety at the service in the event of an emergency (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Developing an emergency and evacuation floor plan (Regulation 97(1)(b)) (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Ensuring that the emergency and evacuation procedures are rehearsed at least once every 3 months by all at the service (Regulation 97(3)(a)).
- Ensuring that the rehearsals of the emergency and evacuation procedures are documented (Regulation 97(3)(b)) (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Ensuring that a copy of the emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions are displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the service premises (Regulation 97(4)).
- Ensuring that those working at, or attending the service, have access to a phone or similar for immediate communication with parents or guardians and emergency services (Regulation 98) and that phone numbers of emergency services are displayed.
- Identifying potential onsite hazards and taking action to manage and minimise risk (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Ensuring all infrastructure and service equipment are regularly checked for condition and maintenance, including emergency exit lighting.
- Ensuring the location of first aid kits, fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment are clearly signposted.
- Ensuring all emergency equipment is maintained on a regular basis in accordance with requirements specified by regulations, such as the Australian Standards Building Code e.g. fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, evacuation kits, sprinkler systems and alarm or duress systems.
- Providing a fully-equipped portable first aid kit (refer to *Administration of First Aid Policy*).
- Developing a regular training schedule for staff to ensure that they are able to deal with emergency situations such as first aid, emergency management and OHS training.
- Regularly reviewing, evaluating and updating emergency management plans, manuals and procedures (at least annually or following an emergency incident).
- Developing procedures to debrief staff following emergency incidents.
- Conducting spot checks of documentation and practices to ensure all requirements of this policy are being complied with.

- Notifying DET in writing within 24 hours of a serious incident (refer to *Definitions*)
- Completing the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* (refer to *Definitions*) where required.
- Notifying DET within 7 days of an incident that required the service to be closed, or a circumstance that posed a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child attending the service (National Law: Section 174(2)(c); Regulations: 175(2)(b)&(c), 176)
- Reporting notifiable incidents (refer to *Definitions*) in the workplace to WorkSafe Victoria.
- Engaging with the Country Fire Authority regarding fire safety awareness and training for the service, including demonstrations of fire equipment, basic fire safety, smoke alarm, fire blankets and escape plans.
- Identifying staff and children requiring additional assistance in the event of an emergency (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Ensuring that emergency contact details are provided on each child's enrolment form and that these are kept up to date.
- Ensuring that an attendance record (refer to *Definitions*) is maintained to account for all children attending the service.
- Keeping a written record of all visitors to the service, including time of arrival and departure.
- Ensuring all staff, parents or guardians, children, volunteers and students on placement understand the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.
- Ensuring there are induction procedures in place to inform new staff, including casual or relief staff, of the emergency and evacuation policy and procedures.
- Ensuring all staff, parents or guardians, children, volunteers, students on placement and others attending the service are accounted for in the event of an evacuation.
- Developing procedures to deal with loss of critical functions, such as power or water shut off.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the emergency and evacuation floor plan is displayed in prominent positions and that all parents or guardians, volunteers, contract staff and relief staff are briefed and aware of the procedures.
- Ensuring that children are adequately supervised at all times and protected from hazards and harm (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*).
- Ensuring that the *Emergency Management Plan* (attached) is followed in the event of an emergency.
- Testing alarms and communication systems regularly such as on a monthly basis.
- Informing the Approved Provider (HDKA) of any serious or notifiable incidents (refer to *Definitions*) that must be reported to DET or WorkSafe Victoria.

Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:

- Implementing the procedures and responsibilities in this policy and the service's *Emergency Management Plan* (attached).
- Supervising the children in their care and protecting them from hazards and harm (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*).
- Providing support to children before, during and after emergencies.
- Checking that the attendance record (refer to *Definitions*) is completed at the beginning and end of each session.
- Checking that the emergency evacuation procedure is displayed in prominent positions and that all attending the service are made aware of these (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).
- Rehearsing emergency evacuation procedures with the children at least once every 3 months (or more often, as required) and ensuring that these are documented (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*).

Emergency and evacuation policy

Mandatory – Quality area 2

- Providing feedback regarding the effectiveness of emergency and evacuation procedures to inform policy, procedures and manuals etc.
- Completing the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*, as required.
- Informing the Approved Provider (HDKA) about any serious incidents or notifiable incidents (refer to *Definitions*) at the service.
- Attending first aid, emergency management and OHS training as required.
- Communicating with parents about emergency procedures.
- raising children’s awareness about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with the service’s emergency and evacuation policy and procedures and the service’s *Emergency Management Plan* (attached)
- Ensuring they complete the attendance record (refer to *Definitions*) on delivery and collection of their children (refer to *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*)
- Providing emergency contact details on their child’s enrolment form and ensuring that this is kept up to date
- Reinforcing the service’s emergency and evacuation procedures with their child
- Following the directions of staff in the event of an emergency or when rehearsing emergency procedures.

Volunteers and students are responsible for following this policy and its procedures while at the service.

Attachments

Complete the [Emergency Management Plan Template for Early Childhood Services](#) and file a copy as an attachment to this policy.