HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Early Childhood Services can be a high-risk environment for incidents and accidents to children, families, Educators, and visitors. The Langwarrin Community Centre is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment through comprehensive policies and procedures and managing risks and hazards appropriately and effectively.

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 NATIONALLAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S 165	Failure to adequately supervise children
S 167	Failure to take reasonable precautions to protect children from harm and hazards
73	Educational programs
74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program

Signature ____Claire Tyrell_____ Date_09__/_09__/_2026__

75	Information about the educational program to be kept available
76	Information about educational program to be given to parents
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
102	Authorisation for excursions
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
104	Fencing
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
107	Space requirements- indoor space
108	Space requirements—outdoor space
109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
110	Ventilation and natural light
111	Administrative space (centre-based services)
112	Nappy change facilities
113	Outdoor space—natural environment
114	Outdoor space—shade
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
158	Children's attendance records to be kept by approved provider
168	Policies and procedures are required in relation to enrolment and orientation
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of Medication Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Child Protection Policy	Nappy Change and Toileting Policy
Clothing Policy	Nutrition and Food Safety Policy
Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy	Enrolment and Orientation Policy
Delivery of, and collection from Education and Care Service Premises	Physical Environment Policy
	Safe Storage of Hazardous Chemicals Policy

Emergency Evacuation Policy	Safe Transportation Policy
Furniture & Equipment Safety Policy	Sleep and Rest Policy
Governance Policy	Student, Volunteer and Visitor Policy
Hand Washing Policy	Sun Safety Policy
Immunisation Policy	Water Safety Policy
Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy	Work Health and Safety Policy

PURPOSE

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* requires approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children, staff and families. We aim to protect the health, safety and welfare of children, educators, families, and visitors of the Service by complying with current health and safety laws and legislation as outlined in this policy.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, the approved provider, nominated supervisor, students and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

The National Quality Framework establishes the standards and learning frameworks to provide high quality inclusive education and care in early and middle childhood settings, which can only occur in a safe and healthy work environment. The NQF makes few references to work, health and safety legislation as it underpins this framework. "*Quality Area 2…. reinforces children's right to experience quality education and care in an environment that provides for their health and safety*." p: 138, 2020.

Thorough work health and safety policies, procedures and practices ensure that:

- management fulfils its responsibility to provide a safe workplace, without any negative impact on the health and wellbeing of employees;
- employees meet their health and safety obligations and are safe in the workplace; and
- the work environment supports quality early education and care.

We are dedicated to ensuring that all health and safety needs are met through the implementation of a high standard of hygiene practices to control the spread of infectious diseases, the prevention and management of injuries and illness, and to provide a safe and secure physical environment for children. In any occurrences where children show any signs of illness, accident, injury or trauma, educators will refer to the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*.

Our staff are committed to assist in infection prevention controls and have completed the COVID-19 infection control training.

The importance of children's nutritional and physical health needs will be promoted by educating children about a healthy lifestyle which will be reinforced through the everyday routine and experiences. Information on health and hygiene principles and practices will be displayed at the Service to provide families with further information.

We believe in quality education and care in an environment that provides for all children's protection through adequate supervision, safe experiences and environments, and vigilance to potential risks. Educators at the Service are dedicated to understanding their legal and ethical responsibility to protect the children enrolled at the Service. Our *Work Health and Safety Policy* provides further detail about Hazard Reduction and Risk Minimisation.

CHOOSING APPROPRIATE RESOURCES AND EQUIPMENT

- The Approved Provider will be ultimately responsible for any purchases of equipment.
- Educators will document any equipment that needs maintenance on a prioritised basis.
- Management will keep up to date with any recalled products by registering products where possible (e.g., electronics)
- Resources and equipment will be chosen to reflect the cultural diversity of the Service's community and the cultural diversity of contemporary Australia.
- The Service will actively pursue the contribution of families regarding toys and equipment at the Service.
- Children will be carefully introduced to new toys and pieces of equipment and taught how to use and care for them appropriately.
- Equipment that should only be used under supervision will be stored in a safe place out of children's reach.
- The use of toys or equipment which involves the use of water will be used under the direct supervision of educators. All equipment will be emptied of water when not in use and stored in such a manner that it cannot collect water.
- Equipment will be checked regularly by the educators to ensure it is in a clean and safe condition which will be recorded on the appropriate indoor and outdoor safety checklist.
- Equipment or toys that require button batteries will be thoroughly assessed to ensure their necessity and safety
- If equipment or toys requiring button batteries are purchased, they must be checked to ensure the batteries are secured in a child-resistant compartment to minimise or prevent access

ON-GOING MAINTENANCE

- The Service will reflect on the environment and establish a plan ensuring that the environment continuously complies with our philosophy of providing a safe and secure environment, that is stimulating and engaging for all who interact with it.
- The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will also ensure that the Service and its grounds comply with Local Government regulations, and regulations regarding fire protection, ventilation, natural and artificial lighting and safety glass.
- Should the Service undertake major renovations, management plans will be put in place to ensure that the safety of educators, children, families, and others at the Service is not compromised.

SAFETY CHECKS

A daily inspection of the premises will be undertaken which will include the:

- Service perimeters
- Fences/Fence Line
- Gates
- Paths
- Buildings
- All rooms accessible by children
- Fixed equipment
- Sand Pit
- Any standing water after rainfall

This must be done in order to identify any dangerous objects in the grounds ranging from sharps to poisonous or dangerous plants and animals. To ensure best practice, the daily safety checks will be conducted prior to the children arriving at the Service.

In the event of a sharp object being found (for example a syringe) educators will follow the *Safe Disposal of Sharps Procedure* and wear gloves and use tongs to pick up the object and place it in the 'sharp object box'. This box will be disposed of as per the recommendations of our local council.

Similarly, trees in the grounds must be checked regularly for overhanging, dead or dangerous looking branches as well as checked for any infestations or nests.

Non-fixed play equipment in the Service grounds can be no more than 1500mm high and must be supervised at all times by an educator. (AS 4685)

The Service will have regular pest inspections carried out by an accredited pest control company. Documentation of these inspections will be kept and any findings from the pest control check will be carried out in line with the recommendation of the pest control company.

The Approved Provider must ensure all fences and barriers that enclose outdoor spaces used by children are of a height and design that children cannot go through, over or under. (Reg. 104).

The Service will ensure laundry facilities are provided that are located and maintained in a way that does not pose a risk to children. The laundry room will be locked at all times. Where hazardous materials may be stored in the laundry relevant signage is displayed. (Reg 106).

The *Indoor and Outdoor Daily Safety Checklists* will be used as the procedure to conduct these safety checks. A record of these will be kept by the Service. Any required maintenance will immediately be reported to the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor who will make the appropriate arrangements to have repairs carried out.

CLEANING OF BUILDINGS, PREMISES, FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

GENERAL CLEANING

- The Service will use structured cleaning schedules to ensure that all cleaning is carried out regularly and thoroughly.
- High touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily
- Educators will clean the Service at the end of each day and throughout the day as needed, signing off on all cleaning duties that have been completed.
- Accidents and spills will be cleaned up as quickly as possible to ensure that the Service always maintains a high level of cleanliness, hygiene, and safety.

When purchasing, storing and/or using any dangerous chemicals, substances, medicines or equipment, our Service will:

- adhere at all times to manufacturer's advice and instructions when using products to clean furniture and equipment at the Service
- store all dangerous chemicals, substances, and medicines in their original containers provided by the manufacturer. All labels and/or use by dates should be kept intact at all times
- ensure any substance found to be stored in a different container than originally provided, or with destroyed labels and/or unknown use by dates where appropriate will not be used under any circumstances

- ensure containers are disposed of correctly following local council guidelines, and not reused under any circumstances
- ensure all dangerous chemicals, substances and equipment is stored in a locked place or facility which is labelled, secure and inaccessible to children. These materials may include, but are not limited to, all cleaning materials, detergents, poisonous or dangerous substances, dangerous tools and equipment including those with sharp and razor edges, and toiletries
- follow the instructions of manufacturers, particularly of any product which may need to be stored in a refrigerated environment
- refrigerate substances that must be stored in a labelled, child resistant container, preferably in a separate compartment or in a part of the refrigerator inaccessible to children
- ensure all hazardous chemicals are supplied with a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) (formerly called a Material Data Safety Sheet). Our Service will adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for use, storage, and first aid instructions recorded on the SDS.
- ensure appropriate personal protective clothing is worn in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions when using and disposing of hazardous substances or equipment.
- seek medical advice immediately if poisoning or potentially hazardous ingestion, inhaled, skin or eye exposure has occurred, or call the Poisons Information Line on 13 11 26, or call an Ambulance on 000
- ensure emergency, medical and first aid procedures are carried out, with relevant notification given to the appropriate authority that administers workplace health and safety and any other person or authority as required by regulations or guidelines
- in any major emergency involving a hazardous chemical or equipment, a hazardous gas, or a fire or explosion hazard, call the emergency services: Dial 000 and also notify the appropriate authority that administers workplace health and safety and any other person or authority as required by regulations or guidelines

HAND WASHING

Effective handwashing is a vital strategy in the prevention of spreading many infectious diseases. Our Service will ensure signs and posters remind employees and visitors of the importance of handwashing to help stop the spread of infectious diseases. All adults and children should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water and/or alcohol-based sanitiser:

- upon arrival at the Service
- when hands are visibly dirty
- when coming inside from being outside
- before and after eating
- before putting on disposable gloves

- before preparing food items
- before and after toileting children and coming into contact with any body fluids such as blood, urine or vomit
- before and after wearing gloves to change infant nappies
- after touching animals or pets
- after blowing your nose or sneezing and after assisting a child to blow their nose
- after meals
- after going to the toilet
- before and after administering first aid
- before and after administering medication
- before and after preparing children's bottles
- after removing protective gloves
- after using any chemical or cleaning fluid

MINIMISING POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

Our Service minimises the use of potentially dangerous substances. Ordinary detergents will be used to help remove dirt from surfaces. Colour-coded sponges will be used in order to eliminate cross contamination.

DISINFECTANTS

Disinfectants are usually unnecessary as very few germs can survive exposure to fresh air and natural light. In an outbreak situation, such as gastroenteritis or other infectious virus (COVID-19) the Public Health Unit or SafeWork Australia, may specify the use of a particular disinfectant and increased frequency of cleaning. In this situation, for the disinfectant to work effectively, there still needs to be thorough cleaning using a detergent beforehand.

Essentially, there is no ideal disinfectant. Disinfectants cannot kill germs if the surface is not clean. It is more important to ensure that surfaces have been cleaned with detergent and warm water than to use a disinfectant.

In the event of an outbreak of gastroenteritis, a disinfectant such as bleach solution may be used following the manufacturer's directions. Gloves must be worn at all times when handling and preparing bleach.

To kill germs, any disinfectant needs:

- A clean surface to be able to penetrate the germ

- To be able to act against those particular germs
- To be of the right concentrate
- Enough time to kill the germs, which is generally at least 10 minutes

DETERGENTS

To work in accordance with *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services,* proper cleaning with detergent and warm water, followed by rinsing and air-drying kills most germs from surfaces as they are unable to multiply in a clean environment. Cleaning equipment should be stored and taken care of so it can dry between uses and not allow germs to multiply.

NAPPY CHANGE AREA

Nappy change areas must be cleaned after each use with anti-bacterial wipes and air dried. Placing paper towel on the change mat and removing this after each nappy change is recommended. Nappy change mats should be placed in the sunlight after being cleaned. Refer to *Nappy Changing Policy and procedure.*

ARRANGEMENTS FOR LAUNDERING OF SOILED ITEMS

Soiled clothing will be returned to a child's home for laundering. Educators will remove soiled content prior to placing clothing into a plastic bag and securely storing these items in a designated area for the families to take home. For more information refer to the *Nappy change and toileting* procedure.

CLOTHING

- Educator's clothing should be washed daily.
- Educators should also have a change of clothes available in case of accidents.
- Dress-up and play clothes out on display should be washed once a week.

TOY CLEANING

Educators are required to clean the children's equipment and toys on a regular basis, and on a daily basis in rooms with younger children, in order to minimise cross contamination and the spread of illnesses. Educators will wash a toy immediately if it has been sneezed on, mouthed, and/or soiled or if it has been discarded after play by a child who has been unwell. The Service will have washable toys for younger children. Toys and equipment must be cleaned more often in the event of an infectious disease or virus is present in the service or community.

RECOMMENDED CLEANING MATERIALS

- Most toys can be washed with normal dishwashing liquid and rinsed with clean water.

- Get into corners with a toothbrush and allow to air dry (if possible, in the natural sunlight).
- Leaving items such as LEGO and construction blocks to drain on a clean tea-towel overnight is ideal.

WOODEN TOYS

- Should be wiped over with a damp cloth – please do not immerse in water as this can destroy the equipment.

PLAY DOUGH

Our Service will reduce the risk of the spread of disease when playing with play dough by:

- encouraging hand washing before and after using play dough
- storing the play dough in a sealed container in the refrigerator between uses
- making a new batch of play dough each week, and
- if there is an outbreak of vomiting and/or diarrhoea, discarding the playdough at the end of each day during the outbreak.

RATTLES AND BABY TOYS

- Must not be immersed in water as it can get inside, rendering the toy useless.
- Wipe thoroughly with hot water or a cloth with diluted detergent

RIDE-ON VEHICLES AND OUTDOOR TOYS

- Must be cleaned (children can often help with this activity).
- Please take care not to leave outdoor toys exposed to the elements as this reduces their lifespan.

PUZZLES AND GAMES

- Wooden puzzles as per 'Wooden Toys' above.
- Cardboard puzzles should be wiped over with a slightly damp cloth.

SUN PROTECTION

Our Service will work in compliance with the SunSmart Program to ensure children's health and safety is maintained at all times whilst at the Service. SunSmart recommends that all early childhood education and care services have a SunSmart Policy to reduce UV damage to those in care, including Educators. Our Sun Safety Policy has been accepted and approved by SunSmart.

Please view our Sun Smart Policy.

DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

Please view our Delivery of children to and collection from an education and care premises.

VISITORS

To ensure we meet Work Health and Safety requirements and ensure the safety of our children, individuals visiting our Service must sign in when they arrive at the Service and sign out when they leave.. Visitors are not to be left alone with children at any time whilst at the service. Working With Children Checks will be recorded and verified for any visitor who is not fully supervised at the service. Visitors to the service are expected to comply with service policies and procedures, including health and safety policies whilst at the service and report any health and safety issues to management.

WATER SAFETY

To stop accidents and illnesses relating to water troughs and other water situations our Service will:

- at all times children near water are closely supervised. A child will never be left unattended near any water
- immediately empty all water troughs etc. after every use, storage should prevent the collection of water e.g., upright/inverted, also check grounds after rain or watering and empty water that has collected in holes or containers.
- ensure water trough are hygienically cleaned appropriately:
    - wash away disinfectant before filling trough

KITCHENS

- Children must not gain access to any harmful substance, equipment or amenity.
- The kitchen has a barrier to prevent unsupervised entry by children into the kitchen.
- The preparation of bottles for children under the age of 2 years is both safe and hygienic at all times and separate from nappy change area.
- Unsupervised children should not be permitted in the kitchen at any time

MONITOR AND REVIEW HAZARDS

Risk management is an ongoing process. Risks must be systematically monitored, and management strategies reviewed to ensure that they continue to be effective and contribute to a safe and healthy work environment. New hazards can emerge over time resulting in control strategies becoming ineffective and therefore may require updating.

BACK CARE AND MANUAL HANDLING

- Manual handling is any activity requiring the use of strength used by the person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person or object.
- Manual handling injuries may be caused by the activities listed above. Injuries can include back strains, similar strains and sprains in parts of the body such as the neck, arm, shoulder and knee.
- Manual handling injuries also include overuse injuries or, because of falling during manual handling, bruising or laceration.

FURTHER RESOURCES

VIC: WorkSafe Victoria is the state's health and safety regulator

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Health and Safety Policy* will be updated and reviewed biennially in consultation with families, staff, educators and management.

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
Australian Government Department of Education. *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0, 2022*
Cancer Council NSW. Early childhood and care sun protection policy: http://www.sunsmartnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Childcare-policy1.pdf
Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023)
KidSafe Australia: https://kidsafe.com.au
KidSafe Australia: (2021). Moveable play equipment
National Health and Medical Research Council. (2024). *Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (6th Ed.). NHMRC. Canberra.
Standards Australia. AS 1851-2005 (incorporating Amendment No. 1). Maintenance of fire protection systems and equipment

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY:	Carol Hopkins	CSO	Sept 2026
POLICY REVIEWED	Sept 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	Sept 2028
VERSION NUMBER	• V2 09.26		
MODIFICATIONS	• biennial policy maintenance • relevant National Law added • resources/toys containing button batteries to be risk assessed and checked regularly for safety		

	• sources checked for currency and updated as required
APPROVED BY	

POLICY REVIEWED BY:	Carol Hopkins	CSO	OCT 2024
POLICY REVIEWED	OCT 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	OCT 2026
VERSION NUMBER	•		
MODIFICATIONS	• New Policy		
APPROVED BY			

POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	REVIEW DATE