

WCS Children's Services

WH&S – Emergency and Evacuation Policy

Purpose

The Service has procedures to follow in the event of any emergency necessitating evacuation. These procedures comply with regulatory requirements and are consistent with recommendations by recognised authorities. They are designed to ensure the swift, safe and calm evacuation of all children, educators, families and visitors. Evacuations are rehearsed regularly so that educators and children are confident in knowing what to do.

The Service has lockdown procedures in response to any critical incident or foreseeable threat of harm to educators, children or visitors. Such an event could be:

- A hostage situation;
- A siege;
- Violent, intoxicated and/or drug affected persons;
- Dangerous animals;
- Critical incident;
- Unidentified external disturbance;
- Power failure or,
- Severe storm.

Strategies and Practices

Evacuation

- Families have access to the Service's Emergency Policy and Procedures.
- The Service's *Emergency and Evacuation Policy* and evacuation procedures are based on risk assessment that identified the potential emergencies relevant to the Service.
- Emergency evacuation plans are prominently displayed throughout the Service. It consists of a floor plan of the Service and indicates the reader's location, the nearest exit, the route to that exit, and assembly areas.
- All exit signs are clearly visible and escape routes and emergency exits kept clear at all times.
- The Service has the required number of fire extinguishers and fire blankets together with other emergency equipment throughout the Service. Fire extinguishers are tested and tagged, and all other equipment checked as recommended. All checks are documented.
- All fire equipment is appropriately sign-posted and kept immediately accessible at all times.
- The Service maintains up-to-date emergency contact details for every child and a compact copy of these is taken to the assembly point.
- The contact numbers of emergency services are accessible to telephone outlets in the Service.

- Educators are trained in the use of fire extinguishers, fire blankets and other emergency fire equipment and know where these items are located.
- The Service's security alarm system is appropriately maintained according to the installer's instructions, if appropriate.
- The Nominated Supervisor ensures that all educators know the Service's Policy and Procedures for emergency evacuations and that they know their roles and responsibilities. These roles and responsibilities are posted beside the emergency evacuation plans displayed throughout the Service, where appropriate. Students and volunteers are told about emergency procedures during orientation and to follow directions from educators at these times.
- Evacuation procedures are rehearsed at least quarterly. Rehearsal occurs at different times on different days of the week. Everyone in the Service, including visitors, is expected to participate.
- The Nominated Supervisor/educator oversees the rehearsals and is responsible for completing the Emergency and Evacuation Record (in conjunction with other educators if applicable), and for implementing any improvements identified in that Report.
- In the event of a power failure, the Service also has access to a mobile phone.
- Educators intentionally teach children about fire safety (e.g. through discussions, songs, games, role-play, fire brigade visits).
- Every year, the Nominated Supervisor/educator arranges for the Fire Safety Officer to assess Service's fire preparedness, if required. Any recommendations in the assessment are followed and the evacuation plans adjusted accordingly.
- The Regulatory Authority and any other government health and safety authority concerned are notified of any incident requiring evacuation at the Service.
- After any incident requiring evacuation of the Service, counselling/debriefing is available to anyone affected. Children are likely to role-play the event afterwards, so any debriefing will include preparing educators to respond appropriately.

Lockdown

- The Service has a signal – distinct from the evacuation signal – to alert educators of the need for lockdown, where appropriate. The signal has been chosen taking into account the need for discretion that could accompany such an event (e.g. a parent acting against a court order). These signals will vary.

Initial notification

- The witness to the event alerts the Nominated Supervisor/educator immediately. Other appropriate authorities on site are also informed.
- The Nominated Supervisor/educator determines whether or not lockdown is appropriate or other actions to follow.
- If yes, the Nominated Supervisor/educator activates the relevant signal.

- The Nominated Supervisor/educator then dials 000 for police/emergency services assistance, and follows the operator's instructions.
- Educators follow all directions of the Nominated Supervisor/educator explicitly, where appropriate.

During lockdown

- All educators and children inside are to remain in their rooms, and those outside are to go inside immediately if safe to do so, and follow lockdown procedures.
- Educators are to lock all doors and windows (draw curtains/blinds) and ensure children are kept secure, if appropriate.
- Educators check the sign-in sheet and ensure that all signed-in children and educators are present, and as soon as it is safe to do so, inform the Nominated Supervisor of the names of any children or educators unaccounted for.
- Do not use the Service phone for external calls. In case of a medical emergency, notify the Nominated Supervisor.
- Everyone is to remain in lockdown until the Nominated Supervisor/educator announces the "All Clear."
- In the event of a critical incident, follow risk assessment and procedures appropriate to Service.

After lockdown

- The Nominated Supervisor/educator notifies parents after the lockdown has ended.
- The lockdown will be documented, and the Service's response reviewed.

Additional safe practices for babies

- The Service has a labelled evacuation cot, if appropriate.

Responsibilities of parents/guardians

- To ensure all contact details for parents and those of the authorised nominees are complete, accurate and up-to-date.

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2018

Reg	168	Policies and procedures in relation to emergency and evacuation
	97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
	98	Telephone or other communication equipment

QA	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
	2.2.2	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.

3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
6.1.1	There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families
6.2.3	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.
7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.2.1	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.

Sources and further reading

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, 2017
- National Quality Standard 2018
- Dr. B. Abbey and P. Maclean, NQS - the complete system of policies, procedures and forms, www.childcarebydesign.com.au.

Further reading

- Kidsafe. Factsheets. <http://www.kidsafeqld.com.au/fact-sheets>

Useful websites

- Queensland Fire and Rescue Service – www.fire.qld.gov.au/

Policy Review

This policy is a living document and will be monitored and reviewed as issues are identified. Proposed changes will be circulated and discussed by all programs and any external stakeholders for approval.

Person Responsible for Review:

Manager, Children's Services

Implementation Date:	3 November 2014	Review Date:	March 2019
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Modification History

Date	Sections and/or Paragraphs	Source	Details
2016/07	Whole document		Reformat
2016/12/05			Change letterhead
2018/02/09	Quality Areas	Revised National Quality Standard 2018	
2018/10	Policy rename	Education and Care Services National Regulations	Policy rename

Approved by Susan Henderson, Manager Children's Services:



Date: 16 January 2017