

ST. CATHERINE'S EARLY EDUCATION CENTRE

EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION POLICY

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for emergency and evacuation and take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. (ACECQA, 2021).

It is vital that if an emergency arises, staff are able to manage the situation confidently and effectively, maintaining the safety and wellbeing of children, families and visitors.

Supporting Educators and children with an emergency situation requires vigilant planning and consistent implementation.

Ensuring that educators and children know what to do in an emergency situation requires vigilant planning and practice. Regularly practicing the drills for emergency situations also provides an opportunity to help support and build on children's coping mechanisms and resilience.

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.

Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership		
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.

Education and Care Services National Regulations	
Sec 174(2)(a)	Serious incident-Any emergency for which emergency services attended
Sec 174(2)(c)	Any incident that requires the approved provider to close, or reduce the number of children attending the service for a period

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Sec 174(2)(c)	Any circumstances at the service that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child attending the service
4	Definitions "multi- storey building" and "storey"
12(d)	Meaning of a serious incident- any emergency for which emergency services attended
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
98	Telephone or other communication equipment
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
136	First aid qualifications
168	Education and Care Services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures are to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
175	Prescribed information to be notified to regulatory authority

Related Policies

Acceptance and Refusal Authorisation Policy
 Arrival and Departure Policy
 Child Safe Environment Policy
 Enrolment and orientation Policy
 First Aid Policy
 Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy

Lockdown Policy
 Record keeping and Retention Policy
 Supervision Policy
 Work, Health and Safety Policy
 Sun safety policy
 Record keeping and retention policy

PURPOSE

Our Service has a duty of care to maintain the safety and wellbeing of each child, educator, and all persons using or visiting the Service during an emergency or evacuation situation. We are committed to identifying risks and potential hazards of emergency and evacuation situations by conducting thorough risk assessments on an annual basis and continually plan for further risk minimisation and improvement to our policy and procedures.

SCOPE

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

IMPLEMENTATION

We define an emergency as an unplanned, sudden or unexpected event or situation that requires immediate action to prevent harm, injury or illness to persons or damage to the service's environment and premises. Emergency situations may pose a risk to an individual's health and safety and is important that services identify any potential emergencies that are specific to our environment. Severe heat or heatwaves also pose an immediate risk to babies and young children and require risk mitigation strategies to be implemented

We have a duty of care to provide all persons' with a safe and healthy environment. The National Quality Standard, Element 2.2.2 encourages Services to effectively manage incidents and emergencies

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in consultation with relevant authorities and practiced and implemented to ensure best practice and the safety of children.

To ensure compliance with National Regulations, the emergency and evacuation procedure must set out:

- Instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency
- An emergency evacuation floor plan

Emergency evacuation plans should be practiced and reviewed frequently. Evacuation plans must be displayed in prominent positions near each exit and in the children's environment with a compliant floor plan for ease of reference clearly showing exit routes and assembly points. The Approved Provider will ensure a risk assessment is conducted to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the service when preparing the emergency and evacuation procedure

Circumstances under which evacuation will occur are as follows:

- Fire within the building or playground
- Fire in the surrounding area where the Service is in danger (If you are unsure how close the fire is call; Local Fire Station: **03 96622311**)
- Flood (flooding) - call State Emergency Service SES-**132 500**
- Severe storm, dust storm, earthquake or cyclone- call State Emergency Service SES-**132 500**
- Dangerous animals, insect or reptile
- Terrorist threat
- Others may include gas explosion, traffic accident or event which could render the building unsafe

To ensure compliance with National Regulations and National Law, our Service will ensure that:

- Emergency and evacuation policies and procedures are available for inspection at the Service's premises at all times
- Obligations under the education and care, national Law and regulations are met
- The Approved Provider will conduct an annual risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the Service
- The approved provider will review the risk assessment after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safe evacuation of children from the service
- Relevant stakeholders/authorities are consulted for advice and guidance to improve risk mitigation strategies as part of our emergency and evacuation plan (police, fire, parents/families, other organisations)
- An Emergency Management Plan (EMP) is developed and updated
- Consideration is made to evacuate infant/s and non-ambulant children evacuating the premises resulting in enhanced ratios
- Additional consideration is made for services operating in multi-storey buildings (assembly areas, lifts not being used, stairwells, non-ambulant children, staffing implications, supervision) [Reg. 97(1) (b)]
- Emergency rehearsals should involve other building tenants and building manager (if applicable)

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- Emergency evacuation plans are displayed in prominent positions near each exit at the Service premises including both the indoor and outdoor learning areas
- The emergency and evacuation procedures include instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency
- Emergency evacuation plans include a floor plan for ease of reference with clearly defined assembly points and clearly marked exit routes from all locations within the Service
- All exits have exit signs clearly visible
- There are no obstructions in hallways, stairways or emergency exits
- All educators, including casual/relief educators and staff members, are familiar with our *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*, procedures and regulatory requirements
- New staff, volunteers and students are provided with information and training about our *Emergency and Evacuation Policy* and procedures during induction
- All staff, visitors and students are aware of emergency evacuation points and assembly areas
- Staff are trained how to use emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire blankets, hoses etc
- National Regulations state that emergency evacuation rehearsals (drills) are to be practiced and reviewed *every three months* by the responsible person, all staff members, volunteers, and children present on the day. **However, to ensure best practice our Service will conduct emergency evacuation drills for each room monthly on differing days so that all children and staff experience an evacuation on a regular basis.**
- Spontaneous rehearsals also take place during the year to assist in refining risk management procedures and evacuation procedures
- A record will be kept ensuring that emergency evacuations are rehearsal at least 4 times per year.
- Each time a planned or spontaneous emergency evacuation drill is performed it is to be timed and documented
- After reflection, notes on any areas that need improving or revising are to be documented educators will discuss and implement strategies to make continuous improvement to procedures which will be documented in the service's staff meeting minutes and quality improvement plan (QIP).
- In the event of limited educators (e.g., early morning or late afternoon), staff members are to work together to perform the duties as per the evacuation plan (the roster must include a responsible person being on the premises at all times to take responsibility and delegate duties).
- Children are provided with age-appropriate support and information before, during and after emergency and evacuation rehearsals (drills)
- All staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in event of an emergency situation
- Regular communication with families includes information about emergency and evacuation procedures
- Families are informed when a rehearsal or drill has occurred
- Each room has an *emergency evacuation bag* located in a prominent position
- *Emergency evacuation bags* are regularly audited and restocked as required
- An up-to-date register of emergency telephone numbers for children is maintained. A copy of the current list will always be available in the *emergency evacuation bag*
- Portable first aid kits are readily available in case of an emergency evacuation
- At least one staff member or one nominated supervisor who holds current ACECQA approved first aid qualifications, approved anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management training is in attendance at all times, to ensure best practice our service ensures all staff members

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(within three months of employment) hold a current ACECQA approved first aid qualifications, approved anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management training

- Medical management plans for children are able to be accessed easily
- Children's medication is collected during an evacuation
- All fire extinguishers, fire blankets, fire hoses, and other emergency equipment located throughout the service will be inspected and tested at six monthly intervals by an authorised company as per the Australian safety standard as 1851-2012:
- Extinguishers will be emptied, pressure tested, and refilled every five years
- All tests performed on emergency equipment and the date on which it was tested will be recorded on a label or metal tag attached to the unit.
- Ensure smoke detectors are regularly tested and batteries replaced annually
- Staff and educators have access to an operating telephone or other means of communication at all times (mobile phone)
- In the event of a telephone not operating or no other means of communication the service will consider closure of the service
- Emergency telephone numbers will be displayed prominently throughout the service in the kitchen, office, staff room and each area where children are educated and cared for.
- Our emergency telephone list (located next to the telephone) includes the numbers for:
 - Police
 - Local fire station
 - Rural Fire Service
 - State Emergency Services (SES)
- Following the emergency evacuation or an incident that poses a risk to the health and safety of children attending the service, an emergency evacuation incident report and an incident, injury, trauma and illness record will be completed
- The approved provider will make a notification of a serious incident to a regulatory authority (within 24 hours) through the NQA IT SYATEM when emergency services have attended an education and care service in response to an emergency, rather than as a precaution or for any other reason or following an incident that poses a risk to the health and safety of children attending the service
- The approved provider will notify the regulatory authority and department of education if the service is required to close for a period of time as a result of a local emergency(Reg.175 (2)(b))

Emergency and Evacuation Procedure Guidelines

(include who is responsible for the implementation of each step)

As per regulation 97, the emergency and evacuation procedures must set out-

- a) instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency; and
 - b) an emergency and evacuation floor plan
- the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider or Responsible Person in charge, will make the final call to whether to evacuate the premises due to an emergency situation
 - contact 000 for local emergencies- provide name, address and nearest cross street, reason for evacuation, phone contact number, number of children and adults evacuating
 - guidance will be provided by the relevant emergency service (Fire service, SES, Police)

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- move all children and visitors to identified evacuation/emergency assembly area as indicated on the *Emergency and Evacuation Plan*
 - collect Emergency Evacuation Bag, Medical Management Plans and associated children's medication
 - collect First Aid Kit
 - check daily attendance record and visitor record
 - once children are safely evacuated, administer first aid if required
- remain calm and reassure children
- if safe to do so warden/management to check the centre to ensure all have evacuated.
- once emergency services arrive, contact parents/emergency contacts
- await instructions from relevant emergency services for re-entering premises or alternative evacuation procedure

Important: Notification of a serious incident to a regulatory authority (within 24 hours) is needed where emergency services attend an education and care service in response to an emergency, rather than as a precaution or for any other reason. Following the emergency evacuation, the educator will complete an *Emergency Evacuation Incident Report* and an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*.

Families will:

- ensure contact details are kept up to date
- provide emergency contact details on their child's enrolment form and advise the service of any change of name or phone number
- ensure the attendance record for their child is completed each day
- ensure they are aware of the service's *Emergency and Evacuation Policy* and procedures
- follow the directions of the Approved Provider/Incident Manager in the event of an emergency or evacuation

Dealing with Trauma

Emergencies and natural disasters can be extremely stressful, and it is normal for children and adults to feel overwhelmed and distressed. People cope with trauma in many different ways. Children look to adults for reassurance, care and opportunities to share their feelings. It is important for educators to understand the impact of disasters and seek help when needed.

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will support educators to provide information to parents and families following any emergency or natural disaster including:

- will the service be open in the days and weeks ahead?
- how to find alternative care and education
- how to contact services for support with dealing with trauma

Several organisation's offer support for educators in these situations:

[Emerging Minds](#)

BeYou- [Trauma informed practice](#)

Preparing for an emergency

[Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology](http://www.bom.gov.au/)

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Jurisdiction specifications for Victoria:

- Department of Health – www.health.vic.gov.au
- WorkSafe Victoria – www.worksafe.vic.gov.au
- Victoria Police – www.police.vic.gov.au
- Country Fire Authority Victoria – www.cfa.vic.gov.au
- Victoria State Emergency Service – www.ses.vic.gov.au

Source

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
 Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). Policy and procedure guidelines- *Emergency and evacuation guidelines*. <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/preparing-nqf-policies-and-procedures>
 Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2023).
 Fire Protection Association Australia: www.fpa.com.au/
 Fire System Services: <http://www.firesys.com.au/Fire-Extinguisher-Service-and-Maintenance-pg14686.html>
 Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2023).
 Guide to the National Quality Framework (2017). (Amended 2020).
 NSW Rural Fire Service: www.rfs.com.au
 Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).
Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

Review:

The policy will be reviewed regularly.

The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
January 2017 Aug 2017	Have updated and included Emergency Evacuation requirements outlined in the National Regulations Updated to meet National Law in respect of a serious incident and notification purposes	January 2018
July 2018	Updated the references to comply with revised National Quality Standard - Minor adjustment in Education and Care Services National Regulations section - Added related policy section - Adjustment on page two in respect of revised NQS	May 2020

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June 2020	Sources checked Addition to the National Regulation	June 2022
July 2022	<p>Policy reviewed and included suggested guidelines from ACECQA <i>Emergency and Evacuation Policy Guidelines</i> (June 2021) and name changed from Emergency, evacuation and Management to Emergency and Evacuations Policy</p> <p>Reformatted policy - some sections moved for better flow Deleted repetitive points Procedure guidelines modified and extended Additional section- Dealing with Trauma Additional legislative requirements added Additional related policies Reference to smoke alarms added Additional section added- <i>Families will</i></p>	June 2024
June 2024	<p>Merged important information section with AP responsibilities</p> <p>Additional legislative requirement added</p> <p>Updated name to DESE to department of education</p> <p>Sources updated</p>	June 2026

EVAUCATION PROCEDURE

Once the alarm has being raised and the Nominated Supervisor or the Approved Provider has deemed it unsafe for the children, staff and visitors to remain in the building, the children's service will be evacuated. The Nominated Supervisor or the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person in Charge will take charge and activate the emergency evacuation procedures (or activate the incident Management Team).

- Sound the alarm. Any educators on breaks will return to their groups and assist with the evacuation.
- Call 000 Inform emergency services of the nature of the emergency (eg. "there is smoke coming from the laundry")
- If the decision is made to evacuate **on-site**, evacuate all children, staff and visitors out of the building in accordance with the evacuation plan, to the **south side of the church up the stairs in the undercover area.**

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- If the decision is made to evacuate **off-site**, evacuate all children, staff and visitors out of the building in accordance with the evacuation plan, to the **Pleasance garden – corner Dryburgh and Canning Street North Melbourne.**
 - collect Emergency Evacuation Bag, Medical Management Plans and associated children's medication
 - collect First Aid Kit
- The Nominated Supervisor or the Approved Provider will take the staff roster, visitor sign in sheet and first aid kit.
- The Nominated Supervisor or the Approved Provider (Fire wardens) will do a final check of the building including ,all children's playrooms kitchen, toilets, staff room
- Once at the assembly area, educators will ensure all children are accounted for. . The Nominated Supervisor or the Approved Provider will liaise with educators to ensure all children, staff and visitors are accounted for.
- The educators will supervise and reassure the children (eg. Singing to them give snacks.)
- Administer first aid if required
- Wait for emergency services to arrive and or provide further information.
- Contact parents/emergency contacts and inform them of the situation