

1. Policy Statement

According to Kidsafe, drowning continues to be one of the main causes of fatalities of Australian children. Every year a number of children are killed and hundreds more are rescued from near drowning situations. Non-fatal drowning incidents are also of great concern as they can have potential long-term effects, including brain damage and permanent disability.

The most common factor in childhood drowning is lack of supervision. A child can drown in as little as a few centimetres of water. Items such as nappy buckets, sinks, pet drinking bowls, ponds, pools, water features and water tanks are potential drowning hazards

St Nicholas is committed to providing children with an environment that promotes their health, safety, and wellbeing. St Nicholas will manage the risks associated with water-based activities such as water play and excursions near water.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to:

- Outline the practices St Nicholas services and employees will implement to ensure the safety of children regarding water safety.
- Ensure families are informed of, and have access to, the service's procedures relating to water safety.
- Support compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, which require services to have policies and procedures in place regarding water safety.

3. Procedure Direction

Step	Detail
Water based learning experiences	Educators will: • Complete an Activity Risk Assessment for all water play activities that may pose a risk to children prior to implementing the experience. The risk assessment must consider the ages and developmental needs of the children who will be engaging in the experience • Ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios) • Ensure all water hazards, including troughs and containers used for water play are emptied by an educator immediately after use • Reinforce water safety messages within the children's programs

	- Only program water-based learning experiences when weather permits (during warmer months) - Adhere to local water restrictions when they are in place
Additional safety measures	- Empty, safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers when they are not in use, e.g. mop buckets, nappy buckets, bathtubs, water troughs, pet water containers - Inspect indoor and outdoor environments for potential water hazards, prior to children entering the space, particularly during and after wet weather. - All pooled water from rain, water play etc must be cleared prior to children using the space to prevent possible drowning - Water for pets at the service will be changed daily and will not be accessible to children unless supervised by an educator - Team members will not consume hot drinks in any learning space or if they are responsible for children during an outing or excursion
Water hygiene	- Clean drinking water will always be available to staff and children - Drinking water bottles and containers will be emptied and cleaned daily. - Boiled water for young children will be boiled and cooled in the bottle prep area or kitchen, prior to the water entering where children are present - Water that is boiled for use with infant formula needs to be completely cooled before being used - Grey water systems or water tanks will be labelled with 'non potable water / do not drink' signage and the children will be supervised in this area to make sure they are not accessing this water for drinking - Educators will discuss with children that the 'grey water' is only for watering the garden and cannot be consumed
Excursions near water	- St Nicholas recognises the risks posed by bodies of water and will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children are able to enjoy water-based excursions safely. - Educators are to ensure that all water hazards are assessed in an Excursion Risk Assessment prior to an excursion taking place. - Excursion Risk Assessments must consider: - the number of children, their ages and abilities - the number of educators including their individual experience, knowledge, and skills - the activities to be undertaken by the children - the environment where the children will be engaged including the presence of water features, pools or any other water hazard that may be present, visibility and accessibility - Authorisation from families will be sought prior to excursions including

	those involving water-based activities. The National Law and Regulations do not specify a specific educator to child ratio for activities where water is a feature. The number of educators' present is to be determined by the risk assessment of the proposed activity. Supervision ratios must be greater than standard. For example, an OOSH excursion to a water based venue might implement a ratio of 1:10, instead of the regular 1:15.
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4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Approved Provider	- Ensure that the obligations under the <i>Education and Care Services National Law</i> and <i>National Regulations</i> are met. - Take reasonable steps to ensure that the Nominated Supervisor, employees and visitors follow the policy and procedures.
Nominated Supervisor	- Inform families about water safety practices at the service - Ensure first aid and CPR qualifications requirements are met at all times - Take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders - Take reasonable steps to inform and support educators and staff of their responsibilities in implementing the policy and procedures at all times - Guide and mentor educators and staff to be able to follow the policy and procedures. - Ensure <i>Activity Risk Assessments</i> are completed prior to water activities being undertaken. If the activity is a regular programmed one, review the Risk Assessment annually. - Ensure <i>Excursion Risk Assessments</i> are completed and that specific water hazards are identified and the risk assessed. If necessary ensure increased supervision.
Educators / Staff	- Always supervise children at water activities closely with an educator remaining at the activity at all times. - Adhere to policies and procedures
Parent / Guardian	- Be proactive in teaching children about water safety - Provide consent for their child to attend excursions where water hazards are possible - Provide a change of suitable clothes

5. Related Documents

Policies and Procedures

- Excursion Policy and Procedure
- Supervision Policy and Procedures
- Sun Protection Policy and Procedure
- Child Safe Environment Policy and Procedure
- Interactions with Children Policy and Procedure

Other documents

- Excursion Risk Assessment
- Activity Risk Assessment

Legislation

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations \(2011 SI 653\) - NSW Legislation](#)
Regulation: 101, 102C, 115
- [Children \(Education and Care Services\) National Law \(NSW\) No 104a of 2010 - NSW Legislation](#)
Section: 165, 167

Other References

[Water Safety | Safety | Kidsafe NSW](#)

[Water Safety | Nemours KidsHealth](#)

[Water quality](#)

[Scalds & scalding: prevention | Raising Children Network](#)

[QA2 Active Supervision Ensuring safety and promoting learning.pdf](#)

National Quality Standard

QA 2.2 Safety

QA 4.1.1 Organisation of educators

QA 7.1.2 Management systems

Other related St Nicholas documents

Activity risk assessment

Excursion Risk Assessment

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Bodies of water	An accumulation of water on a surface including, but not limited to, oceans, lakes, rivers, streams, dams, ponds and wetlands
Adequate supervision	Educators can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation Knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently

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Educator	A St Nicholas team member whose primary role is working directly with children
Staff member	A St Nicholas team member whose primary role is not working directly with children, including cooks, support office team members, administration team members, support workers, volunteers
Early Education	St Nicholas service providing education and care to children aged 0 – 5 years
OOSH	St Nicholas service providing education and care to school aged children
Approved Provider	The legal entity with ultimate responsibility for the service under the National Law
Nominated Supervisor	A person with management or control of an education and care service, responsible for its day-to-day management.
Responsible Person	A Responsible Person is present at an education and care service to ensure compliance, safety, and wellbeing when the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor is not.
Service	Education and care service providing, or intended to provide, education and care on a regular basis to children under 13 years of age

7. Document Review

- 7.1. This Policy will be reviewed when there is a legislative change, organisational change, delegations change, technology change or at least every 1 - 2 years to ensure it continues to be current and effective.

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