

# EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY

## **Rationale and Policy Considerations**

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Emergency and evacuation situations in early education and care services may arise for a variety of reasons, often suddenly and unexpectedly. It is vital that if an emergency situation arises, staff are confident to manage the situation effectively and efficiently, maintaining the safety and wellbeing of children, families and visitors.

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.

## **Legislation and Government Requirements**

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (SA)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations

## **National Quality Framework**

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**Education and Care Services National Regulations** 97, 98, 99, 168

**National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education** Elements 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2

## **Policy Statement**

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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.

## **Strategies for Policy implementation**

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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 premises. Emergency situations may pose a risk to an individual's health and safety. It is important that Services identify potential emergencies that may be specific to their location and environment.

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

- the Approved Provider will conduct a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the Service annually
- emergency evacuation plans are displayed in prominent positions near each exit at the Service premises including both the indoor and outdoor learning areas.
- the plan includes a floor plan for ease of reference with clearly defined assembly points and clearly marked exit routes from all locations within the Service

- all staff are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and regulatory requirements
- all staff are aware of emergency evacuation points
- emergency evacuation rehearsals (drills) will be practiced and reviewed every three months by the responsible person, all staff members, volunteers, and children present on the day
- all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in event of an emergency situation
- each drill will be documented
- our emergency telephone list (located next to the telephone) includes the numbers for:
  - Local fire station
  - Rural Fire Service
  - State Emergency Services

**Circumstances under which an emergency evacuation will occur may include:**

- Fire within the building or playground
- Fire in the surrounding area where the Service may be in danger. If you are unsure how close the fire is contact your local fire station or local Rural Fire Service. Alternatively find and download a Fire Service app such as *Fires Near Me* (NSW), as telephone services can be disrupted during fires.
- Flood (call State Emergency Service)
- Cyclone, severe storm or dust storm
- dangerous animal, insect or reptile
- Terrorist threat
- Other circumstances may include:
  - gas explosion, traffic accident, or any event which could render the building unsafe (eg: earthquake).

**Procedures**

- Our Service will maintain an up-to-date register of emergency telephone numbers for children.
- Emergency telephone numbers for will be displayed prominently throughout the Service in the kitchen, office, staff room and each area where children are educated and cared for.
- National Regulations state that Evacuation rehearsals are to be practiced every 3 months:
- 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 all children participate in the emergency evacuation 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 in the *Emergency Evacuation Rehearsal Record*.
- After reflection, notes on any areas that need improving or revising are to be documented in the *Emergency Evacuation Rehearsal Record*. 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). This scenario will be discussed and documented in the Service's Staff Meeting Minutes (WHS).

- In the event of a fire within the Service resulting in damaged phone lines, a staff member will use the mobile phone to seek assistance as per the Emergency Evacuation Plan.
- 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: *Maintenance of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment*.
- 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. Certificates to verify testing will be filed.
- The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for ensuring all educators, including casual/relief educators and staff members, are familiar with our Emergency Evacuation Policy and procedure.

Important: The notification of a serious incident to a regulatory authority (within 24 hours) is required 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.

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIA (SA)

- Country Fire Service: [www.cfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au)
- South Australia Police: [www.police.sa.gov.au](http://www.police.sa.gov.au)
- South Australian State Emergency Service: [www.ses.sa.gov.au](http://www.ses.sa.gov.au)

#### Links to other Policies

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Lockdown Policy

Acceptance and Refusal Authorisation Policy

Arrival and Departure Policy

Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy

Family Communication Policy

Supervision Policy

Health and Safety

Retention of Records Policy

#### Sourced from

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Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Government – Emergency Services: <http://www.australia.gov.au/information-and-services/public-safety-and-law/emergency-services>

Children's Services Central. (2012). *Managing emergency situations in education and care services*. PSC National Alliance: <https://www.echr.edu.au/docs/default-source/resources/ipsp/managingn-emergency-situations-in-education-and-care-services.pdf?sfvrsn=8>

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Fire Protection Association Australia: [www.fpa.com.au/](http://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. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Framework (2020)

NSW Rural Fire Service: [www.rfs.com.au](http://www.rfs.com.au)

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

*Work Health and Safety Act 2011.*

**Ratified by Management Committee September 2020**  
**Review October 2023**