

POLICY: 6.1 Child Safe Environment

Procedure: 6.5 Fencing

This procedure aims to ensure the safety of children in care is maintained when children are at the Educator's residence. Fencing is the last barrier preventing children from leaving the Educator's residence unaccompanied.

6.5.1 Linking to Policy

This procedural guidance should be read in conjunction with the Service **6.1 Child Safe Environment Policy** and will assist the Approved Provider, Management, Staff (Nominated Supervisors, Coordinators, and Administrative Staff members) Educators, Educator Assistants and parents/guardians to implement the policy. The procedure covers:

[6.5.2 Role and Responsibilities](#)

[6.5.3 Swimming Pool Fencing](#)

[6.5.4 Other Fencing](#)

[6.5.5 Monitoring Fencing](#)

Regulation 104 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 states:

The Approved Provider of an Education and Care Service must ensure that any outdoor space used by children at the Education and Care Services premises is enclosed by a fence or barrier that is of a height and design that children preschool age and under cannot go through, over or under it.

The intent of regulation 104 is that even when the Service fails to provide adequate supervision, children under school age should not be able to leave the premises unaccompanied or undetected. In this respect, the regulation is designed to ensure that each Educator's fence is failsafe.

6.5.2 Role and Responsibilities

The Nominated Supervisor and Coordinators will, before registering an Educator at the Service:

- Ensure each proposed Educator's residence or venue has a boundary fence of a design so as a preschool child could not crawl under, climb over and the structure's strength would prevent a child from going through the fence.
 - o The rails are at least 90cm apart.
 - o There are no structures, pots, chairs, bins, tables, wheelbarrows, or other ladder-like items or structures near any boundary fence that could pose a climbing hazard.

Educators will ensure:

- Their fence is maintained and secure to prevent a child from climbing over, getting under, or going through; and
- The gates are secure, and children are unable to open at any time.
- Scan the outdoor environment to ensure no climbing material, pots, chairs, gardens or equipment is placed near any fence which could be a climbing hazard.
- Before purchasing equipment or erecting any structure, consideration is given to the proximity of this equipment to the fence, and the likelihood of a child using the structure as a climbing hazard to flee the yard.

6.5.3 Swimming pool/spa fencing

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- Where there is a swimming pool at the proposed Educator's residence, request a pool safety compliance certificate before care can occur.
- The Swimming Pool is fenced according to the Swimming Pools Act 1992. This requires a fence height to be a minimum of 1.2 metres, with the gap underneath to be no more than 10cm. There is also a requirement that there be a clearance of 1.2 meters from the top of the fence to any object that the child could climb.
- Any projections, or indentations, from the fence or gate, shall not be more than 1cm (e.g. bricks that stick out) unless they are spaced at least 90cm apart and that the lower edge of any projections or indentations is at least 1.1 meters below the top of the fence or gate.
- At least bi-annually request a new Swimming Pool Safety Compliance Certificate.

6.5.4 Other Fencing

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Have available a home safety check, which is used to ensure all Educators' fencing across the Service is assessed at least annually as part of the re-assessment of an Educator's residence;
- Ensure if the fence has horizontal rails, rods, wires or bracings, that could be used for climbing, or if the vertical parts of the fence are more than 10cm apart, the following requirements shall apply:
 - a. The horizontal parts shall be a minimum of 90cm apart. There shall be at least 1.1 metres between the bottom rail and the top of the fence or gate.
 - b. The spacing between any vertical parts of the fence, such as palings, rods, or wires, shall not exceed 10cm at any point.
- Gates should comply with the height requirements mentioned above for fencing.
- Ensure balconies, stairs, and ramps are enclosed if a child could fall 50cm. Enclosures may be a balustrade or wall and must be:

- i. 1 metre in height above the level floor surface,
 - ii. Constructed so that it contains no horizontal rails or footholds other than at the top and base,
 - iii. Have openings not exceeding 10cm between vertical rails and between the bottom of the balustrade and the floor.
- Childproof barriers that are appropriate to the ages of children in care must be provided at the top and bottom of stairs at the residence where education and care is provided if the height at which a child can fall reaches 50cm for outdoor areas and 60cm for indoor areas.

6.5.5 Monitoring Fencing

The Nominated Supervisor and Coordinator will:

- Ensure the boundary fencing, gates, and balustrades are maintained to the standards discussed within this procedure when conducting regular support and monitoring visits to the Educator's residence or approved venue.

Educators will:

- Maintain the standard of the fence by ensuring a boundary fence is designed so that children are prevented from scaling or crawling under it.
- Ensure there be nothing to climb onto within 1.2 metres from the top of the fence e.g. rubbish bins, barbeques, or wheelbarrows.
- At least every 2 years provide a new Swimming Pool Safety Compliance Certificate at re-registration.
- Maintain their Swimming Pool fence in accordance with the Swimming Pools Act 1992.
- Ensure any projections, or indentations, from the fence or gate, shall not be more than 1cm (e.g. bricks that stick out) unless they are spaced at least 90cm apart and that the lower edge of any projections or indentations is at least 1.1 metres below the top of the fence or gate.
- Ensure if the fence has horizontal rails, rods, wires or bracings, that could be used for climbing, or if the vertical parts of the fence are more than 10cm apart, the following requirements shall apply:
 - o The horizontal parts shall be a minimum of 90cm apart. There shall be at least 1.1 metres between the bottom rail and the top of the fence or gate.
 - o The spacing between any vertical parts of the fence, such as palings, rods, or wires, shall not exceed 10cm at any point.
- Ensure gates comply with the height requirements mentioned above for fencing.
- Ensure balconies, stairs, and ramps are enclosed if a child could fall 50cm. Enclosures may be a balustrade or wall and must be:
 - i. 1 metre in height above level floor surface,
 - ii. Constructed so that it contains no horizontal rails or footholds other than at the top and base,

- iii. Have openings not exceeding 10cm between vertical rails and between the base of the balustrade and the floor.
- Provide childproof barriers that are appropriate to the ages of children in care at the top and bottom of stairs at the premises of a children's Service if the height at which a child can fall reaches 50cm for outdoor areas and 60cm for indoor areas.

Review

	Date	Details
Revision 00	07/2015	Original Policy Issued
Revision 01	12/2016	Reviewed
Revision 02	08/2017	Reviewed
Revision 03	10/2020	Reviewed and separated from Policy

Related Documents

Policies

6.1 Child Safe Environment Policy

Reference

Refer to 6.1 Child Safe Environment Policy

Kid safe – Family Day Care guidelines

Queensland Government – Department of Education, Fencing Requirement for Family Day Care retrieved 5th Dec 2019 from:

<https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/legislationAndGuidelines/PPORresources/Fact%20sheets/fencing-requirements-family-day-care.pdf>