

6.12 Water Safety Procedure

1. Purpose

My Place Family Day Care is committed to ensuring the safety of children and managing the risks associated with any kind of water hazard or water feature, including but not limited to nappy buckets, wading pools, spas, fishponds, and swimming pools.

This procedure aims to support Educators and workers to implement the principles outlined within the My Place Family Day Care 6.4 Water Safety Policy and should be read in conjunction to it.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all Nominated Supervisors, Coordinators, Educators, Educator Assistants, parents and children enrolled with the Service.

3. Definitions

Swimming Pool: Is generally an excavation or structure that is:

- Capable of being filled with water to a depth of 300 millimetres or more
- Solely or principally used for swimming, bathing, wading, paddling or some other human aquatic activity despite its current use.

For the full definition of 'swimming pool' refer to Schedule 2 of the Building Act 1975 or section 3.2 of the Guidelines for pool owners and property agents, published by the Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works.

4. Procedure

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Nominated Supervisors and Coordinators are responsible for:

- Providing direction and education to Educators and other workers on the importance of children's safety and supervision in and around water as part of the induction process. This will include:
 - Reviewing the assessment of the home safety processes and maintaining standards.

- Reviewing this policy to ensure all staff and Educators understand their obligations.
- Develop and keep an up-to-date daily safety checklist that can be used by Educators, if required. This will outline the assessment of the Educator's environment to ensure no child is exposed to a body of water unsupervised.
- Ensuring that all pools, ponds, spas or other water features are included as part of the assessment to determine the safety of an Educator's residence. How these hazards are made inaccessible to children must be considered, prior to an Educator being approved to commence providing care.
- Obtaining and filing a copy of relevant current certification certificate for all pool/spa fencing and (self-latching and lockable) gates separating the pool from the play space children access.
- Completing a Water Hazard Safety Inspection Checklist on a monthly basis, ensuring that all pools/spas and water features on an Educator's property are taken into consideration. Any follow up required as a result of one of these inspections must be completed and reviewed within the timeframe stated in the Checklist.
- Ensuring that all Educators are aware that no children enrolled at the Service will access an Educator's swimming pool or any public pool.
- Ensuring each Educator has a current first aid qualification and that a copy of the qualification is kept on the Educator's file/register at the Service Office.

Educators are responsible for:

- Minimising the risk of harm resulting from a water feature or hazard. Examples of how this can be done include, ensuring:
 - No animal water bowls are located in an area accessible by children.
 - No buckets with liquid in them are accessible by children.
 - Bathtubs are either empty or immediately emptied after use, and never left unattended.
 - No containers that can gather water are left in the outdoor spaces.
 - Where there is a swimming pool/spa at the residence, the gate is locked at all times and there is no equipment or furniture within 1.5 meters of the fence.
- Organising and maintaining a current certification certificate for all pool/spa fencing and (self-latching and lockable) gates separating the pool from the play space children access. These certificates must be renewed at least every two years or if any work is required on fence adjacent to a pool/spa. My Place Family Day Care reserves the right to request additional inspections and certificates as required.

- Completing a Home Pool Spa Risk Management Plan which includes:
 - A detailed description of the hazard.
 - A Risk assessment – noting the risks to children (likelihood and consequences).
 - The controls required (actions to address the hazard) and certifications required.
 - If children continue to attend the residence, notification to families of the situation, including outlining how children will be protected and the strategy for ensuring children have access to outdoor play spaces with written parental permission.
 - The name of the person responsible, and when this must be completed.
 - The date of the Service assessment of the fence before the play space can be accessed again by children.
- Ensuring that all pools/spas and any other water feature are highlighted on the evacuation diagram for the premise.
- Ensuring a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) chart is displayed near any water.
- Complying with all other instructions outlined within this document.

4.2 Pools and Spas

Where an Educator has a pool or spa, they will:

- Ensure the fencing and other safety requirements are in accordance with local council guidelines and any other regulatory requirements.
- Apply for and provide the Service with a current “Pool Safety Certificate”.
- Complete a daily safety check of the water hazard area.
- Ensure all fencing must be clear from pots, plants, chairs, toys, and equipment or any object that could be used as a step for children to gain access.
- Ensure **no child** can access a spa or swimming pool at any time.

4.3 Wading Pools

The Service will only allow wading pools if the portable pool:

- Is incapable of being filled with water to a depth of more than 300 millimetres.
- Has a volume of less than 2000 litres.
- Has no filtration system.

Where an Educator has a wading pool, they will:

- Ensure the pool meets the above criteria.
- Have a discussion with both their Coordinator and all families, prior to using the wading pool. This discussion will include:
 - The description of the wading pool and how and when it would be used.
 - A risk assessment process and identified strategies to maintain the safety of the children.
- Ensure the wading pool water is no higher than the knee height of the smallest child in care.
- Ensure that all children are directly supervised at all times when in or around the wading pool.
- Never be distracted by other adults or talking on mobile phones, ensuring their full attention is on what the children are doing.
- Never leave children alone near water and for children under 5, always stay at no more than an arms-length from the child.
- Keep the wading pool clean and disinfected appropriately.
- Empty the wading pool after use and ensure it is stored in a way that prevents the collection of water.
- If a child passes a bowel motion while in a wading pool, remove all children from the pool immediately, empty the water and disinfect.
- Ensure that children with diarrhea, upset stomachs, open sores or infections will not use the wading pool.
- Ensure all children wear clean bathers and are encouraged to go to the toilet before entering the pool.
- Apply sunscreen to all children at least 20 minutes before any swimming or water play, and reapply regularly (at least within 2 hours) as required.

4.4 Water Containers and Bodies of Water

The existence of any water hazards, water features or swimming pool, at or near a residence or a proposed excursion site, is considered a water hazard and requires a risk management plan to be completed and submitted to the coordination unit **prior** to an excursion occurring.

Educators will:

- Work with a coordinator to identify hazards, consider the risks, identify and implement controls, and reassess the risk to children.
- Ensure that all water containers, such as ponds and nappy buckets, are either fitted with a safety cover, emptied immediately after use or made inaccessible to all children.

- Ensure Bathtubs are either empty or immediately emptied after use, and never left unattended.
- Ensure any containers that hold or collect water are covered and placed out of reach of children.
- Ensure all ponds (human-made or natural) and water features located at an Educator's residence, have a guard or barriers in place to protect children from falling into the water. These will require a monthly Water Hazards Safety checklist to be completed by a Coordinator and a Pool Safety Daily Checklist to be completed by the Educator.
- Work with the Nominated Supervisor and Coordinators to identify an appropriate guard or barrier for a water hazard that is of a structure which prevents all children from lifting it, getting under it, climbing over it or falling through:
 - The guard or barrier must be of sturdy material such as snake or bird wire which is attached by plastic-covered wire or similar product.
 - The material used will not have holes greater than 10 centimetres square.
 - The guard or barrier must not present as a risk to children (e.g., there are no sharp edges or points, there is no rust present).

4.5 Water Activities

When conducting water activities, Educators will:

- Not provide water experiences directly after any child has been unwell, in particular where the child has had diarrhea or upset stomach, open sores or nasal discharge.
- Ensure all water equipment used to hold a body of water for water play is emptied immediately after use
- Ensure water troughs and wading pools are stored in a place where there is no opportunity for this equipment to gather water.
- Apply sunscreen before water play and regularly as required.
- Ensure children are supervised at all times.
- Ensure any water troughs used, are not used without a stand and are kept off the ground.
- Ensure children are discouraged from drinking from water activities.
- Teach children about staying safe in and around water.

4.6 Water and Excursions

When planning and conducting in an excursion, Educators will:

- Conduct a risk assessment and management process for the proposed destination prior to commencing the excursion. In particular, they will ascertain if there are any water hazards and in accordance with the requirements outlined in the excursion policy – complete the excursion risk management plan and consider if the excursion is appropriate given any water hazard is a high-risk activity.

- Identify all potential water hazards.
- Consider the risk to children i.e. determining the likelihood of the child accessing the water hazard and evaluating the potential consequences of this occurring.
- Using the risk matrix calculator to identify the overall level rating of the experience.
- Consider what controls can be implemented to reduce or mitigate the risk to children who are exposed to the hazard.

5. Review

This procedure will be reviewed every two years or sooner as required.

| | Date | Details |
|------|-------------|---|
| V1.0 | 07/2015 | Original procedure issued |
| V2.0 | 12/2016 | Reviewed |
| V3.0 | 08/2017 | Reviewed |
| V4.0 | 10/2020 | Reviewed |
| V5.0 | 04/01/2024 | Reviewed – some content changes, significant change to document structure |

6. Related Documents

Policies

6.4 Water Safety Policy

Forms

Water Hazard Safety Inspection Checklist
Pool / Water Hazards / Water Features Daily Checklist
Home Pool Spa Risk Management Plan
Empty Spa Risk Management Plan
Excursion & Transport Permission & Risk Management Form

References

Department of Housing and Public Works, Guidelines for pool owners and property agents,
https://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/4112/guidelinesforpoolowne rsandpropertyagents.pdf