

Water Safety Policy

Policy Statement & Commitments

National regulations governing education and care services require Brunswick East Primary School Outside School Hours Care Service (BEPS OSHC Service) to have policies and procedures on water safety, including safety during any water-based activities.

Water hazards at BEPS OSHC Service are kept to a minimum; however, some equipment, toilets, basins, and water play can be hazardous for children. Risk-assessment strategies inform the management of water at BEPS OSHC Service to ensure that children can experience the natural environment, and engage safely in water play.

BEPS OSHC Service is committed to:

- ensuring that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury, including when children are around water or involved in water-based activities
- maintaining close supervision of children at all times, particularly where water is involved.

It is the responsibility of all educators at BEPS OSHC Service to implement this policy.

Procedures

The following procedures are applicable on the premises of BEPS OSHC Service premises:

- Children are closely supervised near water at all times during water-based activities, and are never left alone where water is present.
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) guidelines and procedures are on display in the hall.
- Water safety messages will be embedded in the children's educational program, where appropriate, including during the following water-based activities: water play, sand play and play with elements of nature, such as mud, creek beds, watering the garden and rain catching from the natural environment.
- Educators cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers (e.g. buckets).
- Any tubs or buckets used for water-based activities are emptied immediately after every use, and are stored in a way that prevents the collection of water.
- After rainfall, working bees, garden watering or any other community access to the School grounds, educators check the outside environment and empty water that has collected on equipment or in containers.

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- The thermostat on the hot water system is set to a medium temperature to ensure that hand washing and hygiene procedures can be carried out without risk or scalding.
- Illustrations or photos representing hot and cold water will be on display near the taps.
- Educators do not have hot drinks of tea or coffee when they are caring for and educating children. On occasion, Milo or soup are available to educators and children as a part of the program snack times, during which educators and children are encouraged to sit down.
- Any warm water around children will be tested to ensure that is not hot enough to cause scalding.

The following procedures are applicable off the premises:

BEPS OSHC Service does not typically plan for excursions or routine outings that involve children swimming or playing near bodies of water because the Service cannot provide educators who have a recognised award experience in water safety and rescue procedures.

From time to time excursions or routine outings may take effect in places where there is a body of water (e.g. lake or pond), in which case, the following will apply:

- The planning of such excursions is subject to BEPS OSHC Service’s Excursions, Routine Outings and Extra-curricular Activities Policy, including risk assessment and determining adult-to-child ratios for adequate supervision, which is determined at a higher ratio for water play and any experiences near a body of water.
- Water safety messages are built into the children’s educational program.
- Supervision near a body of water on an excursion is maintained by educators who hold a first aid certificate that includes Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).
- Excursion permission forms will clearly state where bodies of water will be present, and will include added safety precautions to ensure families are informed about risk assessment procedures, and about community water-safety messages for families to share with their children prior to the excursion.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- General Service Information Policy
- Establishing a Protective Care Environment
- OH&S
- Incidents, Injury, trauma & the Administration of First Aid

Sources & Legislative References

The Better Health Channel, *Water Safety for Children*, www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Education & Care Services National Regulations (2011) – Regulations 168 (2)(h)&(a)(iii)
National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care (2010) – Elements 2.3.2 & 3.1.1

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