Cheltenham Community Centre Early Learning Childcare

E14. Water Safety

1. Policy

1.1 Cheltenham Community Centre (CCC) Early Learning Childcare is committed to:

- The safety, health and wellbeing of children. All water-based activities will be adequately supervised, and no child will be left unattended when in proximity to water.
- Ensuring that the approved provider, educators and all other staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to water safety.
- Providing opportunities for children to explore their natural environment including through water play.
- Ensuring that children are protected from the risks associated with drowning or non-fatal drowning experiences.
- Ensuring that water safety awareness is included in our planning process through engaging and age-appropriate activities.
- Providing information to educators, staff, parents/guardians. Volunteers and others at the service about water safety.

1.2 This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, Early Childhood Educators, staff, students, volunteers, children, parents/guardians who wish to enroll or have already enrolled at CCC Early Learning Childcare and others attending the programs and activities of Cheltenham Community Centre.

1.3 In order to assess whether the values and purposes of this policy have been achieved, we will:

- Welcome feedback from everyone affected by this policy regarding its effectiveness
- Monitor the implementations, compliance, complaints, and incidents in relation to this policy
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- Revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required, and
- Notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

2. Procedure

2.1 **Supervision**

- Children will be supervised at all times when near water, including during water play activities and any other instances involving water.
- Educator-to-child ratios will be maintained to ensure adequate supervision, with additional staff allocated if necessary for water-related activities.
- Staff will position themselves to actively monitor children, ensuring all areas of water play are visible.

2.2 **Risk Management**

- A risk assessment will be conducted prior to any water-related activities, identifying potential hazards and implementing control measures to mitigate risks.
- Standing water in outdoor areas (e.g., buckets, tubs, or pools) will be emptied immediately after use to eliminate drowning risks.

2.3 **Education and Awareness**

- Water safety awareness will be incorporated into the planning process through age-appropriate activities and discussions.
- Children will learn about the dangers of water and how to stay safe, both at the centre and in the wider community.
- Educators will use resources such as stories, songs, and interactive activities to reinforce water safety concepts.

2.4 **Staff Training**

- All educators will receive training in water safety practices and first aid, including CPR, to ensure they are prepared to respond in emergencies.
- Regular refresher training will be conducted to maintain staff competency in managing water-related risks.

2.5 **Parental Communication**

- Parents will be informed about the centre's water safety practices through newsletters, the parent handbook, and updates during events or meetings.

2.6 **Incident Response**

- Any water-related incidents will be documented and reviewed to improve practices and prevent future occurrences.
- A clear emergency plan is in place for water-related incidents, and all staff are familiar with their roles in such situations.

2.7 **Maintaining a Safe Environment**

- Water used for play will be clean and changed regularly to prevent contamination or illness.
- Outdoor areas will be regularly checked for hazards such as stagnant water, leaks, or slippery surfaces.
- The centre will ensure all water containers, hoses, and taps are stored safely and out of children's reach when not in use.

By adhering to these procedures, CCC Early Learning Childcare Centre aims to create a safe and enriching environment that prioritises the safety of children around water.

3. Legislation and regulations

3.1 Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Standard 2.3: Each child is protected
    - Element 2.3.1: Children are adequately supervised at all times
    - Element 2.3.2: Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/
- Commonwealth Legislation - Federal Register of Legislation: https://www.legislation.gov.au

4. Definitions

4.1 **Hazard:** Asource or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.

4.2 **Water-based activities:** (in relation to this policy) refer to any recreational or educational activities involving water, including but not limited to water play, using sprinklers, misting systems or hoses, playing in puddles, or engaging in activities where children are in or around water. These activities are designed to promote learning and enjoyment while ensuring safety measures are in place to prevent accidents or harm.

4.3 **Water hazard:** (in relation to this policy) can lead to drowning or non-fatal drowning incidents. Drowning hazards include large bodies of water such as swimming pools, rivers, creeks, dams and ponds. Smaller bodies of water, including buckets, water containers and poor drainage which allow water to collect can also present drowning hazards for young children.

5. Sources and related policies

5.1 **Sources**

- Kidsafe – Water Safety Fact Sheet: www.kidsafevic.com.au
- Royal Life Saving Society – Australia: www.royallifesaving,com.au
- Victoria Government – Play it Safe by the Water: Water safety for toddlers | vic.gov.au

5.2 **Services policies**

- Child Safe and Wellbeing
- Administration of First Aid
- Emergency and Evacuation
- Nutrition, Oral Health and Active Play
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Child Safe Environment

Revision History

Date	Revision	Revised by
14/12/2024	Created	Leanne Lee-Ack
29/08/2025	Reviewed and updated	Leanne Lee-Ack