Work Health Safety Policy

Quality Area 2: Children’s health and safety
Standard 2.1: Each child’s health is promoted.
Standard 2.2: Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children.
Standard 2.3: Each child is protected.

In conjunction with;

Quality Area 3: Physical environment
Standard 3.1: The design and location of the premises is appropriate for the operation of a service
Standard 3.2: The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play
Standard 3.3: The service takes an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a sustainable future

It is our commitment to provide a safe environment for all major stakeholders in our Service and recognised as the responsibility of the Licensee and staff. In fulfilling this responsibility the employer/employee has a duty to provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and where risk to health is recognised and minimised.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Develop appropriate WHS policy and programs
- Set up a mechanism to consult about WHS matters with employees
- Establish a training strategy
- Establish a hazard identification and workplace assessment process
- Develop and implement risk control strategies, and
- Promote, maintain and improve these strategies

The Nominated Supervisor will appoint a Work Health and Safety Officer:

- All staff will undergo an induction upon commencement of employment
- Educators and management will support the belief that prevention is better than cure

All Educators, along with management take responsibility in:

- Providing and maintaining safe systems of work
- Maintaining the work place in a safe and healthy condition
- Providing information, training and supervision for all employees enabling them to work in a safe and healthy manner
- Maintain information and records relating to employee’s health and safety
- The Nominated Supervisor and WHS Officer are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy. In fulfilling the objectives of this policy, WHS is a standard item on the monthly staff meeting agenda to ensure that it is always being addressed and practices are being reviewed.
WHS Officer - responsibilities:

- Regular equipment checks
- Regular chemical compliance checks (MSDS and First Aid)
- Monitoring staff Manual Handling procedures
- Maintaining first aid boxes
- Reviewing cleaning and disinfecting procedures
- Complete Service audits regarding WHS and Workplace Safety
- Seek and provide information on training for staff to attend regarding workplace safety and manual handling

Staff - responsibilities:

- Ensure that children, families and visitors to the Service are not exposed to risk to their health or safety and are free from harm
- Observe, implement and fulfil the responsibilities under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Follow the correct manual handling procedures
- Take all reasonably practical steps for their own health and safety and of others affected by their actions at work
- Ensure work areas are safe and help reduce accidents to themselves and others
- Employees to inform Nominated Supervisor and/or WHS Officer of any incidents and accidents in the work place as soon as practicable
- Carry out all safety checklists that are implemented including but not limited to; playground, classrooms, cot room, bathrooms, kitchen and laundry
- Follow correct record keeping procedures for incidents and accidents etc. Including the Quality Improvement Plan and WHS Reporting folder
- Report any potential and actual hazards in the work place to the WHS officer
- Check children’s equipment regularly
- Supervise children at all times
- Store all dangerous chemicals appropriately
- Keep children out of kitchen areas
- Ensure all power points have safety plugs
- Do not have hot drinks around children
- Shut and lock all gates behind you
- Clean up all spills immediately (to prevent slipping)

Continued on the next page:
The Service refers to the Manual Handling Code of Practice as part of our commitment to best practice methods. All staff members are required to undertake Workplace Health and Safety Training.

Educators are at risk of work related ergonomic injuries, particularly back injuries, through carrying children, bending, reaching and not using adult sized furniture.

To prevent this, Educators are to be mindful of:

- Use adult height utilities and equipment, including sinks and change tables
- Use small chairs with good back support instead of squatting or bending for interaction with children
- Use an adult feed chair for feeding infants, or sit in a low chair with good back support at child level
- Use drop sides on cots
- Use beds that are light weight and stackable with washable mattresses
- Have shelving, filing cabinets and storage cupboards at a suitable height to avoid stretching to reach them
- Use child sized ladders for nappy changing
- Where possible kneel rather than bend to avoid back problems
- Carry children only when necessary, in the correct way - with one arm under the child's buttocks and the other arm supporting the child's back. At the same time hold the child facing you, as close to your body as possible. Try to avoid carrying a child on your hip because this will strain your back
- Be careful to lift with a balanced and comfortable posture when lifting awkward loads
- Minimise the need to reach above shoulder level and use a step ladder
- Avoid extended reaching forward e.g. leaning into low equipment boxes. Share the load if the equipment is heavy, long or awkward.
- Ask for help and organise a team lift when sliding, pulling or pushing equipment
- Use equipment and furniture that can be moved around safely, easily and as comfortable as possible
- Place lighter items higher on shelves
- Lift furniture using at least two or more people
- Where possible arrange children's activities, sleep around furniture, and equipment to minimise manual handling
- Minimise lifting of children by having steps/foot stools/ladders in areas where lifting of children is likely to be needed, such as nappy change rooms
POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- The WHS Officer will ensure that current information on manual handling is available at the Centre and will explain the manual handling policy to all staff.

- The WHS Officer or other nominated person will ensure that all Team Members have been inducted and orientated to the Centre and complete all relevant documentation to indicate the understanding and training.

- The WHS Officer will arrange appropriate training in manual handling for staff annually and will advise the nominated safety officer who has the responsibility, to ensure that Team Members on any outing also adhere to the best practice in manual handling.

- Management will ensure that, within budget limits, the safest aids and equipment will be provided.

- All equipment and devices will be well maintained and readily available to Team Members.

- Adequate seating will be provided at the Service for Educators to sit with children at tables.

- Care will be taken when lifting children and where possible a child should be comforted by a Team Member in a seated position.

- Where developmentally appropriate, children should be encouraged to get on and off chairs and equipment by themselves.

- Staff Members will rotate manual handling tasks whenever possible. Lifting children onto change tables etc.

- The WHS Officer or other nominated person will identify manual handling hazards and will confer with staff on ways to minimise the hazards.

- Manual handling risks will be constantly monitored and procedures reviewed.

- Where special circumstances exist (such as pregnancy or a pre-existing back injury) which may restrict staff members’ ability to lift children or move equipment, they should discuss the situation with the Director to ensure that there are no unsafe expectations of their capacity in relation to manual handling. If the Centre is not able to offer light duties, the Centre will require a Medical Clearance for all injuries or medical conditions.

- Where possible, kneel rather than bend down, in order to avoid neck and back problems.

- Carry children only when necessary. The correct way to carry a child is with one arm under the child’s buttocks and the other supporting the child’s back. At the same time, hold the child facing you, as close to your body as possible. Try to avoid carrying a child on your hip because this may strain your back.

- When lifting awkward loads be careful to lift with a balanced and comfortable posture.

- Minimise the need to reach above shoulder level and use a step ladder.

- Avoid extended reaching forward e.g. Leaning into low equipment boxes. Share the load if the equipment is heavy long or awkward.
When sliding, pushing or pulling equipment, if the equipment is not easy to move, ask for help and organise team lift.

All manual handling accidents and injuries will be recorded. *Never twist while lifting*

Move equipment when children are not around.

Rearrange storage so that it is easier and safer to replace and remove items.

Lift only within the limits of your strength.

Make sure you can see where you are going when carrying equipment or children.

Be extra careful when lifting a child with additional needs. *Avoid accidents with careful housekeeping*

The floors and other walking surfaces are uncluttered, even and non-slippery.

The workplace is tidy.

There is adequate space to perform each task.

Equipment is maintained regularly.

Lighting is adequate.

Wet floor signs to be used.

**Correct Storage and Shelving Height** - To check the height at which it is safest for each individual to work, stand with feet together and hands by sides. The breast height range for handling loads is around waist level and the acceptable height for lifting is any point between the individual’s wrist and shoulder.

**How to lift safely**

1. Place your feet in a stride position.
2. Keep your breastbone as elevated as possible.
3. Bend your knees.
4. Brace your stomach muscles.
5. Hold the object close to your centre of gravity.
6. Move your feet not your spine.
7. Prepare to move in a forward-facing direction
8. Ask for help when it is not possible to lift your own.
9. Given that caring for children is physically demanding it is wise to do a warm-up exercises for three to five minutes before starting work. Muscles and tendons are more likely to be damaged when cold.
This policy was made with consideration of Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 and Work Cover 2013.

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