

Policy Statement

The Service has procedures to follow in the event of any emergency which comply with regulatory requirements and are consistent with recommendations by recognised authorities. They are designed to ensure the swift, safe and calm evacuation, shelter in place or lockdown of all children, staff, families and visitors.

The Service has identified that there are three procedures to follow in the event of an emergency; a lockdown, shelter in place or an evacuation.

An Emergency Procedures Risk Assessment is conducted to identify risks and develop elimination control measures for a variety of emergency situations.

Strategies and Practices

- The *Emergency and Evacuation Policy* and procedures are available to parents upon enrolment and staff upon induction.
- The Service's *Emergency and Evacuation Policy* is based on a risk assessment that identified the potential emergencies relevant to the Service. These risks are assessed periodically, and policies and procedures are reviewed as required.
- Evacuation Diagrams (A3 sized) and procedures including staff responsibilities are prominently displayed at chest height throughout the Service at identified exits.
- All exit signs are clearly visible and escape routes and emergency exits are kept clear at all times.
- The Service has the required number of fire extinguishers and fire blankets together with other emergency equipment throughout the Service. Fire extinguishers are tested and tagged, and all other equipment checked as recommended. All checks are documented.
- All fire equipment is appropriately sign-posted and kept immediately accessible at all times.
- The Service maintains up-to-date emergency contact details for every child and a compact copy of these is taken to the assembly point.
- The contact numbers of emergency services are displayed outdoors, in each room of the Service, are programmed into the Service's mobile phone as well as being located in the Service's emergency evacuation backpacks.
- The service has emergency backpacks stocked with supplies needed for an evacuation or lockdown e.g. nappies, water.
- All educators are trained in the use of fire extinguishers, fire blankets and other emergency fire equipment and know where these items are located.
- Each identified emergency procedure is rehearsed every three months. Rehearsal occurs at different times on multiple days of the week to ensure all educators and children participate in the emergency rehearsal. Everyone in the Service at the time, including visitors, is expected to participate. The Nominated Supervisor (NS) advises all educators of planned rehearsals to encourage their understanding and cooperation. It also ensures that staff recognise a genuine alarm activation when it occurs.
- The rehearsal will be documented on an Emergency Procedure Rehearsal Record and include the Responsible Person, children, staff and any volunteers present at the time. Any improvements identified will be included in that report and strategies to address these will be developed.

- The service has keys strategically located throughout the service in the event that an evacuation from the yard is required. The keys unlock both gate locks.
- In the event of a power failure, the Service has a mobile phone.
- In the event of a real emergency evacuation or lockdown at the Service, the Regulatory Authority and any other government health and safety authority concerned are notified within the timeframe required in the Regulations.
- The Service has a signal – distinct from the evacuation signal – to alert staff of the need for a lockdown. The signal has been chosen considering the need for discretion that could accompany such an event (e.g. a parent acting against a court order).
- The Service has labelled evacuation cots as well as evacuation bags that include a First Aid Kit.
- In the event of an emergency, staff will ensure any children, staff or visitors with medical conditions (e.g. asthma, anaphylaxis) or other additional needs (such as mobility, visually impaired, hearing impaired, emotional, psychological) are supported. Staff will develop and implement individual support strategies for any children in consultation with families, e.g. earphones in the evacuation bags for a child who has identified loud noises, such as the alarm, as a trigger.
- The Service will have identified provisions of food, milk, drinking water and nappy change supplies designated for emergency, shelter in place events, to provide for overnight stays if required.
- The Service will take into consideration staff needing to attend to threats to their own personal property or family, and how that may affect educator to child ratios when making the decision to close the service.
- In the event of an infectious disease pandemic being declared, the Service will determine the appropriate response strategy and implement all measures recommended by recognised authorities to ensure the health and safety of all stakeholders is prioritised.

Emergency Procedure

- The witness to the event determines the appropriate response strategy; evacuation, lockdown or shelter-in-place and the relevant signal is activated. The first responder will use calm, directive language to delegate roles amongst staff.
- Staff alert the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person immediately, if possible.
- Staff follow all policies and procedures explicitly.
- Staff maintain a record of actions/decisions undertaken and times.
- The Nominated Supervisor, or in their absence, the Responsible Person will perform the role of Chief Warden. They will liaise with emergency services and co-ordinate the evacuation, shelter in place or lockdown as required.
- Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person (RP) will contact the Approved Provider as soon as possible.
- When possible, the service will share emergency information with other stakeholders/services that may be affected E.g. Macleay Early Learning Collaborative, Local Radio, West Kempsey Public School, Kempsey Shire Council.

Post Emergency

- The Service will keep a record of calls made from the Service's mobile phone regarding collections by taking screenshots of the "Recents" folder in the telephone application.
- The Service will collect, document and evaluate information relating to the emergency from all relevant stakeholders on the Emergency Rehearsal Procedure Record. Identify improvements/strategies and change policies and procedures as required. Review Service Emergency Procedures Risk Assessment.
- Organise debrief with the children and staff, and families if required.
- Offer counselling and support services for anyone affected by the emergency e.g. Centrelink, Trauma support groups, EAP.
- The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person must report the event to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours.

References

- *Education and Care Services National Law*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
- *Australian Childcare Alliance Sample Policy Jan 2020*
- *Children's Services Central 'Managing Emergency Situations in Education and Care Services' 2012*

Policy Review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities where necessary, as part of the review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

EMERGENCY & EVACUATION PROCEDURE

<p>EVACUATION (Threat at Service location)</p>	<p>LOCKDOWN (Silent containment)</p>	<p>SHELTER-IN-PLACE (Outdoor or indoor play spaces not safe)</p>
<p>Witness decides on evacuation route – front door or rear gate?</p> <p>Evacuate children, staff and visitors from the Service to the evacuation point. <i>The mobile phone, outdoor roll, Explorers’ roll, and the emergency backpacks are taken. The Discoverers staff will gather the Allergy Buddy’s if safe. The Explorers will use the allocated Evacuation Cots to transport non-walking children if possible otherwise staff will carry them to the muster location.</i></p> <p>The Chief Warden or allocated staff member will do a sweep of the building if safe to do so <i>to ensure all areas have been cleared</i></p> <p>Staff mark the roll to ensure that all children, educators and visitors are accounted for. <i>The QikKids App can be used to cross match the hardcopy rolls.</i></p> <p>Dial 0000 for emergency services assistance if required and follow the operator’s instructions.</p> <p>Families will be informed of the emergency as soon as possible. <i>Initially, notification of the event and to advise safe evacuation has occurred and further contact will be made regarding re-unification, then a later notification when it has been deemed safe to collect their child/children and to specify from which location and a collection deadline e.g. TEXT/EMAIL “Have had an emergency. We have evacuated and we are safe. Avoid the area until cleared and we will notify when safe to collect. There is no need for immediate collection.”</i> <i>Note: Staff may be guided by emergency personnel to relocate to another location.</i></p> <p>Families will be contacted to advise when it is safe to collect and from what location.</p> <p>Upon collection families/authorised persons will sign children out <i>either by the hard copy rolls, the QikKids Next App, or the child and adult being photographed together on the Service mobile phone (timestamped record)</i></p> <p>Staff do not re-enter the building <i>until cleared by emergency services, or the Chief Warden. If it is determined to be safe to return to the building, re-check rolls and discuss, as developmentally appropriate, the emergency that has taken place</i></p>	<p>Witness decides lockdown required and relevant signal is activated. <i>Witness continues to monitor situation.</i></p> <p>Staff guide all children in a calm, timely manner to their designated lockdown location. <i>When children are playing indoors, Explorers and Discoverers to the Explorers Cot Room, and Investigators and Inventors to their shared bathroom. During Indoor/Outdoor time; * Explorers and children playing in Discoverers room to the Explorers Cot room, * Children in the Investigators, Inventors or outdoors to the Inventors/Investigators shared bathroom</i></p> <p>The last staff member indoors in each play space is to sweep the outdoor area <i>to ensure all children have been moved to the lockdown location.</i></p> <p>Staff ensure a telephone and the relevant rooms Allergy Buddy’s and backpacks are taken to the lockdown location if safe to do so. Set the phones to silent. <i>Staff not working directly with the children lock down in their current location e.g. Storeroom, bathroom.</i></p> <p>Lock all windows and doors and turn off lights <i>to ensure the lockdown area is secure.</i></p> <p>Staff mark the rolls <i>to ensure that all children, educators and visitors are accounted for. The Outdoor Roll holder will need to call the Explorers Room internally to account for all children.</i></p> <p>If deemed necessary, Dial 0000 <i>for Police/Emergency Services assistance, and follow the operator’s instructions.</i></p> <p>Have a staff member wait at the main entry <i>to the Service to guide emergency services personnel if it is safe to do so.</i></p> <p>Do not answer any knocks on the door. <i>The Chief Warden or emergency services personnel will advise staff in person or by phone when there is no longer a threat, and it is safe to end lockdown.</i></p> <p>Families will be informed of the emergency as soon as possible. <i>Initially, notification of the event and to advise safe lockdown has occurred and that further contact will be made regarding re-unification E.g. TEXT/EMAIL “Have had an emergency. We have locked down and we are safe. Avoid the area until cleared. Will notify when collection possible.”</i></p> <p>Families will be contacted to advise it is safe to collect.</p> <p>Families/Authorised persons will sign children out <i>using the Services iPad’s, as per usual</i></p>	<p>Witness decides if shelter in place required, and safe locations to do so.</p> <p>Staff are to assemble the children calmly to safe locations.</p> <p>Staff mark the roll <i>to ensure that all children, educators and visitors are accounted for.</i></p> <p>Secure the building from the hazard <i>(e.g. Close windows and seal doors from smoke or close off flooded bathroom).</i></p> <p>Families will be informed of the emergency as soon as possible <i>advising we have safely sheltered in place. They will be given the option to collect their child/children or allow us to continue monitoring the situation or asked to collect if deemed necessary.</i></p> <p>Staff will remain updated <i>using TV, local radio or online information sources regarding bushfire/weather warnings and advice.</i></p> <p>Upon collection families/authorised persons will sign children out <i>using the Services iPad’s, as per usual</i></p>